A PAGE OUT OF THE HISTORY OF THE EASTERN QUESTION.

THE ANGLO-AFGHÁN STRUGGLE:

(SKETCH OF THE WAR OF 1879-80.)

BY

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AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION.

THE Great Sláv question is indissolubly bound up with the position of England in Southern Asia and especially in India. It is hidden from no one that the gradual extension of the power of Russia towards the shores of the Black Sea and of the Bosphorus has been accepted by Englishmen as a threat against their sovereignty in Asia. The Crimean campaign had no other motive.

When towards the close of the year 1877 grave events were overhanging the Balkán Peninsula and Asia Minor, the Conservative Ministry of Great Britain decided to take an active part in the approaching war. On pages 511—513 of the present exposition* will be found a general outline of the plan of English war operations.

But the era of the Crimean campaign had passed away for ever. The English Government vacillated, and limited its action to the despatch of a small fleet to the walls of Constantinople, and to debarking a weak Anglo-Indian Brigade on the island of Malta.

One of the causes of this wavering on the part of England has now been explained; it was the attitude taken up with respect to India by Shir-Ali-Khán, the Amir of Afghánistán. Having gone over openly to the side of Russia, the Amir compelled the English to maintain their Indian Army at a war strength.

This course of action on the part of Shir-Ali was the excuse made by the English for proceeding to restore their weakened prestige in Central Asia.

The war which they began dragged on for more than two years. It served as the touchstone of the power of England in India, for in our exposition the reader will find incontro-

* Russian Text.—W. E. G.

vertible evidence of the weakness of her military preparedness in that country. In the struggle success shewed itself on the side of the Afgháns, and the English were saved by Sirdár Abdul-Rahmán-Khán, the Russian candidate for the throne of Afghánistán. Thus, then, has been demonstrated the power of Russia in Central Asia and the aid afforded by us to the English.

Russia does not strive to overturn English rule in India. This fact is clear to any one who has attentively observed our policy in Asia. In that policy nothing lies hid. Its object is thoroughly clear and comprehensible. Russia and England have common interests with respect to the peoples inhabiting this portion of the globe, and our Government would of course prefer to have for a neighbour a sovereignty founded on European civilisation rather than monarchies both barbarian and warlike.

We will allow ourselves then to forecast the future, and to give utterance to the belief that the English will be compelled, by the force of unavoidable events, to cast off the bad opinions which they nourish regarding Russian designs in Asia, and to recognise the real necessity for entering with the Russians on that path of steady accord so advantageous to both parties.

L. N. SOBOLEFF.

ST. PETERSBURG,
14th (23rd May) 1882.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

EVENTS of great importance are now occurring in Southern and Central Asia. Great Britain is putting forth all her moral and material forces in order to firmly secure her rich East-Indian possessions.

The Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78 shook the prestige of Great Britain in the East. The Russian successes in Trans-Caucasus and on the Balkán Peninsula gave the people of Asia to understand that a power exists which in its might not only does not yield to Great Britain, but even considerably surpasses her * * Every body is aware that during the late war England was on the side of Turkey; that she did not take an active part in that war was only because she had no sort of hope of counting on success.

The war ended. The Treaty of San-Stefáno was concluded, followed by that of Berlin.

The Government of Great Britain endeavoured to be at ease, but it could not rest quiet when realities met it face to face: Kárs and Batoum had become Russian territory, a portion of Danubian Bessarabia had passed over to Russia, and European Turkey was divided. Servia, Montenegro, and Roumánia, after receiving fresh territory, became independent states; to Bulgária was made over some Servian territory; Roumelia received autonomy. Greece was promised a new frontier line, and Bosnia and Hertsegovina, with a portion of the *Sanjak* of Novo-Bazár, were incorporated in the Austrian dominions.

Western Europe, fearing an increase to the power of Russia as the natural head of the Slávs, interfered at the close of the Russo-Turkish struggle. This interference materially differed, however, from that of the year 1850. Then the nations of Western Europe desired to *preserve* the powers and forces of the Turks, but at the period of the Berlin Congress their only aim was the *spoliation* of the Turkish Empire. In

order not to lose her prestige in Asia, Great Britain must perforce not come out of the business empty-handed. This, of course, was altogether imperative, and so she decided to filch from prostrate Turkey the island of Cyprus. The unfortunate Sultán, having been deceived by the English, was obliged to consent to their demands.

Lord Beaconsfield to all appearances triumphed. It seemed to him that the credit of England in the East had been upheld. But in a short time he was bitterly undeceived. In fact the Asiatic peoples, who had followed with close attention the Russo-Turkish war and the course of action pursued by Great Britain, understood the real state of the situation, *viz.*, that Turkey was prostrate, that Russia had come victoriously out of the struggle, and that England, whilst supporting the Sultán with counsel and with money, had neither the decision nor the power to arrest the victory of the Russian arms.

According to English notions the East is divided into three parts: China and Japan are on the right flank, India and Afghánistán are in the centre, and Persia and Turkey are on the left flank. Now, in all these countries England enjoys vast influence. India, indeed, she rules, whilst Afghánistán, Persia, and Turkey wish to place themselves under her influence. India is the vastest and most favourable of her marts. In that country only is the power of the English supreme; but for the maintenance of that power an army of 200,000 men has to be maintained.

All the endeavours of the English are exclusively directed to the maintenance of the safety of the Indian Peninsula. So long as that peninsula is not threatened by direct danger, the English zealously labour about the preservation of Turkey, Persia, and Afghánistán from the arms of Russia.*

* There are indications that this system of preserving India is losing importance in the eyes of certain Englishmen. Thus the Revd. Malcolm McColl delivered a lecture in London on the 10th (22nd) December, 1879, entitled "England and Russia in the East." The lecturer regarded the idea of an attack on India as too gigantic, and therefore one with which Russia was not concerned. Taking into consideration that India would soon become a burden rather than a gain to the English, he even doubted whether Russia or any other European power would accept that country as a gift from the English. Accordingly, the lecturer was of opinion that the English have no special interest in the future of Constantinople, which is important only when considered as the gate of India; Englishmen should rather look to their proper interest and cease to nourish an irrational hatred towards Russia.—*Author.*

The acquisition of Cyprus has had no effect on Asia, and Great Britain's influence has remained unimproved. Turkey has begun to understand the utter uselessness of English support; Persia, on receipt of Kotur, was ready to completely subject herself to the influence of Russia; the late Shir-Ali-Khán, Amir of Afghánistán, did not desire even to hold communications with the Viceroy of India, but turned his eyes in an opposite direction. In his letter to the Sultán of Turkey, dated 10th Muharram 1295 of the Hijra [7th (19th) January 1876] Shir-Ali-Khán wrote as follows:—*

"Your Majesty, I know this well; indeed all I said in my last letter has been justified, *viz.*, that the friendship of the English is a word written on the ice, but now Your Majesty must be convinced by actual experience how little it does to trust to their friendship, for you see how the English steadily abandon their friends, in their misfortune, to the working of fate;" and again, "I consider it my duty to most humbly beseech Your Majesty to forego all alliance with England and to enter into an agreement with Russia." †

In India the condition of affairs has become alarming. The Native Press, with unheard of boldness, has spoken of the weakness of Great Britain; its organs counsel the people to labour towards putting an end to the foreign yoke which is hated by all India: the voice has resounded, suggesting the idea, "is it not time to cast the English into the sea?"

Not long ago the *Times* acknowledged that "in the beginning of 1878 there were indications in India of dissatisfaction with England and discontent at English administration. The language of the Native Press has become nothing more or less than seditious, and well-informed judges have admitted that it has really got beyond the controlling influence of civilised Natives." "England is held to have yielded to Russia, and is recognised as the weaker

* Mayer and Paget: "Afghánistán, its Political and Military History, Geography, and Ethnology, including a full account of the war of 1839-42," and an Appendix showing "the prospects of a Russian invasion of India." London, 1879, p. 191.—*Author.*

† Forty years ago Dost-Muhammad-Khán, Shir-Ali-Khán's father, proudly said to Burnes, the Envoy of the Viceroy of India, "I see that England does not value my friendship. I knocked at your door, but you drove me away. It is true that Russia is a long way off, but through Persia, which belongs to the Tsár, as does India to you, she can assist me." See the compilation of Carl Frederich Neimann entitled "Trauerspiel in Afghánistán."—*Author.*

power; so that all eyes have been turned expectantly towards St. Petersburg."

The uneasiness in India has produced a panic in Calcutta and in London. A series of repressive measures adopted by the Viceroy have not led to any peace of mind.

The English have at last understood the direction which their affairs in the East are taking, and have determined on restoring their waning importance by some kind of foreign, brilliant, and withall easy undertaking.

The war with Afghánistán was determined on in the summer of 1878. By the autumn of that year all was ready, and on 8th (20th) November the declaration was made.

The Anglo-Afghán complication is considerably changing the condition of affairs in Central Asia, and therefore Russian society should devote to it the most serious attention. The Russian Press has carefully understood the true meaning of this complication, and has daily followed and is following the occurrences of the war in Afghánistán.

The author of the present sketch, in pursuit of the current occupation, has essayed the object of making Russian society acquainted with the Anglo-Afghán war through a series of more or less connected commentaries. His wish is, however, a very modest one. He would press on the attention of his readers, not a history of the war, but a short sketch, which may serve hereafter as materials for that history.

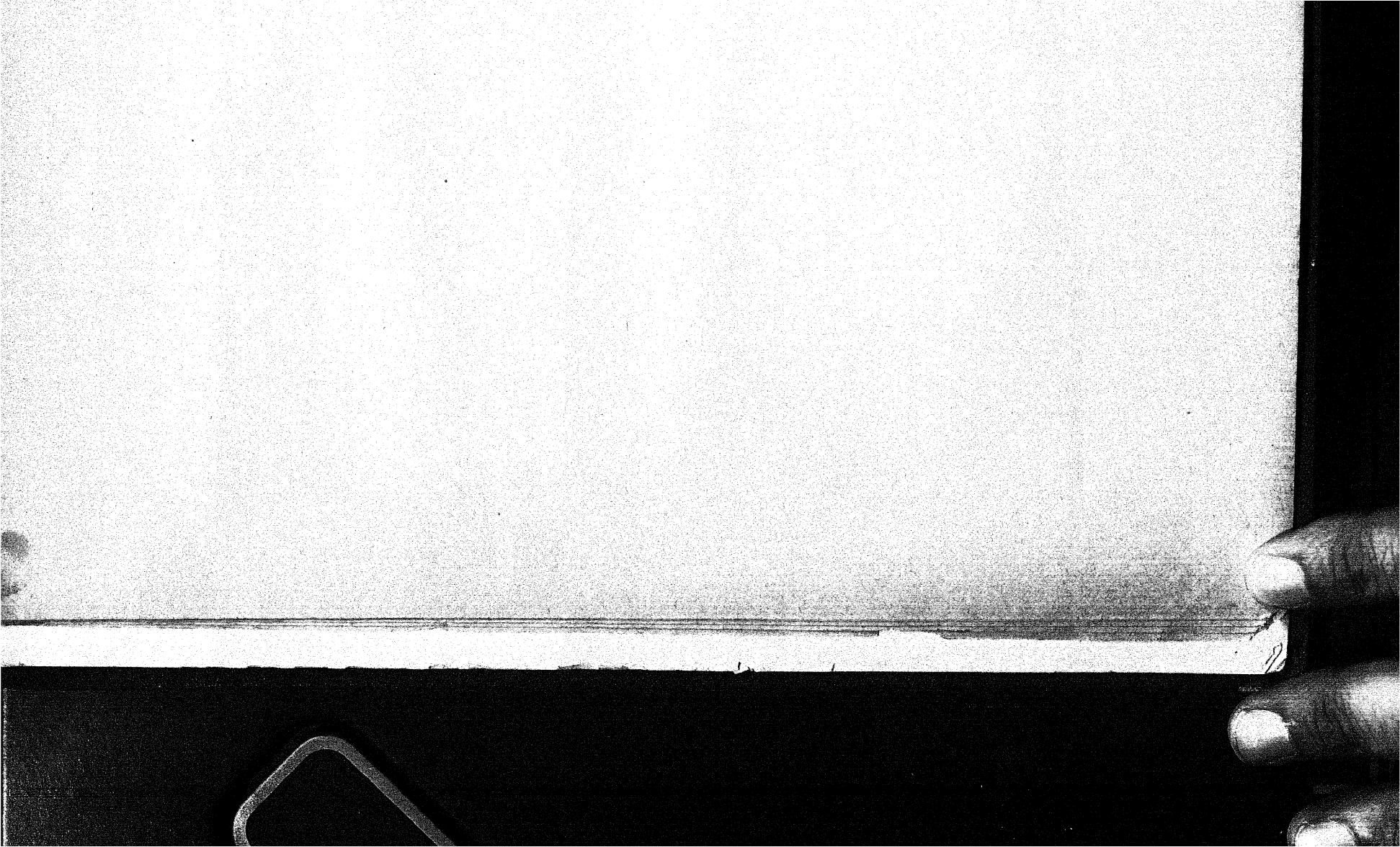
In 1878 he began to insert in the *Russki Invalid* (our Military Magazine) some notes on the war which had begun; this narrative was, however, only continued up to the 16th (28th) March 1879.

When the second series of Anglo-Afghán operations began, the writer inserted in the above paper some more notes. The first twelve chapters of the present work contain the purport of those notes, but the 13th chapter has been specially prepared for insertion in this volume.

The reports of the English papers have served as the chief source in the author's description of the war; hence the work which he undertook is almost entirely based on the news communicated by telegraph. The author hopes that his

labour may not be in vain, for he is deeply convinced that Russian society should follow, minutely and step by step, the English operations in Asia, and this, if for no other reason, because the Russian boundary in Asia stretches over an extent which embraces 11,000 *versts* (7,333$\frac{1}{3}$ miles). Hence every important occurrence in Asia or elsewhere must inevitably reverberate on the frontiers of our own Empire.

L. N. SOBOLEFF.



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[Such as are not noted here and which concern the portions of the work that have been translated, will be found in the pages of the English text.]

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Amir's instructions, dated 23rd August (4th September), ordering the Afghán authorities at Kandahar to obey the English officers.

Amir's letter (telegraphed) to Viceroy, dated 30th August (11th September) 1879, thanking him for his letter of the 26th August (7th September) 1879, and assuring him of a continuance of his loyalty to the British Government.

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Calcutta telegram, dated 8th (20th) December 1879, notifying that General Gough intended to halt at Jagdalak until General Bright had joined him, but that General Bright himself awaited fresh reinforcements before making a move forward.

Calcutta telegram, dated 7th (19th) December 1879, describing the movements along the Pesháwur line of communications towards Sherpur.

Calcutta telegram, dated 18th (30th) May 1880. Commenting on the equanimity, amounting to apathy, of the Indian Government regarding the tribal raids in the Kuram Valley.

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Civil and Military Gazette, published at Lahore. Various extracts from—.

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Cranbrook, Lord. Despatch from —, Secretary of State for India, to Lord Lytton, Governor General of India.

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Daily News. No. 10418 of 1879, containing an article entitled " Kábul, its Rulers and its People."

Daily News. On the subject of the execution of Afgháns carried out at Kábul after investigation at the hands of a Committee appointed for the purpose by General Roberts.

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Daily News. Allahabad telegram, dated 1st (13th) October 1879, expressing regret that the defeated Afgháns should have got clear away from Kábul after General Roberts's Force had engaged them.

Daily News. Communication, dated November 4th (16th) 1879, announcing that Yusuf-Khán had become the leader of the rebel party in Kohistán.

Daily News. Berlin telegram, dated 11th (23rd) November 1879, regarding alleged intention on the part of the English Government to occupy Herát in conjunction with Persia.

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Daily Telegraph. Constantinople telegram relating to news received there from Teherán, in connection with the proposed occupation of Herát by Persia.

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* It is not known whether this is the work which Mr. C. Marvin has reproduced and curtailed under the title of "Colonel Grodekoff's ride from Samarcand to Herát," or another and more complete publication.—W. E. G.

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Standard. Communication, dated Kábul, 14th (26th) November 1879, describing the burning of villages in the neighbourhood of Kábul.

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Standard. Giving percentage of sick amongst British and Native troops comprising the garrison of Sherpur.

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Standard. On the severity exercised by General Roberts towards the Afgháns.

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* Translated into English by F. C. Daukes, Esq., B.C.S.

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Times. Kábul telegram, dated 26th November (8th December) 1879, reporting that the notion of breaking up Afghánistán into several States had again been brought forward, and that the old idea of allowing Persia to occupy Herát had been revived.

Times. Telegram, dated Sherpur, 3rd (15th) December 1879, communicating the fact of the occupation of the city of Kábul and the Bála-Hissár by hostile Afgháns.

Times. Opinion of a correspondent at Thal, dated 14th (26th) December 1879, that it was a mistake to go beyond that point.

Times. Telegram, dated Kandahar, 16th (28th December) regarding alleged flight of some officers on the occasion of appearance in the camp at Kandahar of Mir-Ahmad-Khán and three other *Gházis*.

Times. Telegram, dated 5th (17th) January 1880, showing that the most serious attack of the Ghilzais on Jagdalak took place on the 7th (19th) December 1879.

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Times. Kábul correspondence, dated 12th (24th) January 1880. Arguments put forward that anarchy entailed by British withdrawal from the country is as nothing when the interests of both England and India are considered.

Times. Announces that the Persian Government had directed its agents to afford every assistance to the English in the supply of whatever might be required for the English army operating in Afghánistán.

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the present Amir of Bukhára, and the fact of his having joined General Roberts' suite after the English occupation of Kábul.

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Viceroy's letter to Amir, dated 26th August (7th) September 1879, informing him of the despatch of an English force towards Kábul.

Viceroy's despatch, dated 8th (20th) September 1879, reporting the receipt of a letter from the Amir communicating news from both Afghán-Turkistán and Herát.

Viceroy's telegram, dated 31st August (12th) September 1879, reporting measures adopted by his Government to avenge the massacre of the British Mission at Kábul.

Viceroy's despatch, dated 13th (25th) September, reporting that the Mustaffa had received a letter from Ayúb-Khán at Herát, mentioning that the Kábul regiments there had again mutinied, but had quieted down on receiving pay to which they held they were entitled.

Viceroy's telegram, dated 6th (18th) December, reporting that General Gough's detachment had been attacked by the Afgháns at Jagdalak.

Viceroy's despatch, dated 7th (19th) April 1880, reporting Afghán night attack on the British outpost of Dubrai, between Chaman and Kandahar.

Viceroy's telegram, dated Simla, 17th (29th) April 1880, regarding the attack on General Ross's force by bands from Wardak and the Logar Valley.

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(All the English Papers contained the text of this treaty, and it is also to be found in the Weekly Edition of the *Times*, No. 131 of the 4th June 1879.)

* Appendix II.

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II.—"*Map of the Kábul and Kuram Valleys, dated 1880.*" Scale 24 *versts* (16 miles) to the inch. Longitude east of Pulkoff . . . . . Facing page 147.

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VI.—"*Sketch of the ground whereon occurred the disaster of Maiwand on the 15th (27th) July 1880.*" Scale 100 yards to the inch . . . . . Facing page 720.

N.B.—This sketch is a copy of that taken by Lieut. the Hon'ble G. Talbot during a visit to the battle-field in September 1880.

VII.—"*Map to illustrate the military operations on the Helmand in June and July 1880.*" Scale 24 *versts* (16 miles) to the inch . . . . . Facing page 768.

* None of these appear in the abridged English Edition.

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* Every endeavour has been used to condense a somewhat prolix work of over 820 pages 8vo by eliminating everything taken from English sources (the thread of the narrative being preserved) and by omitting "vain repetitions." An attempt has also been made to put the subject-matter in such a form as to admit of easy reference.—W. E. G.

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* The working out by the Russians of these routes is surely an indication of the importance which they attach to the Turkistan approaches to India as distinct from those on the Trans-Caspian side.—W. E. G.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

The author of this work, Major-General L. N. Soboleff, was for some time Chief of the Asiatic Department of the Russian General Staff. After the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78, he was sent by the Russian Government to Bulgaria as Prime Minister of that principality. His efforts in his new post to "Russianise" the State to which his services had been lent, were so keen and transparent that the Bulgarian authorities procured his recall to Russia. General Soboleff's recent letter to the *Russ* newspaper, in which he strongly urges that the time has arrived for the Russians to crown their aggressive policy in Central Asia by invading India, should lend additional interest to his criticism of our last campaign in Afghánistán. It may further be stated that General Soboleff belongs to the Anglophobe party in Russia, a party which, as recent telegrams convince us, is fast taking the lead in guiding both Russian public opinion as well as the mind of the Emperor in the direction of an aggressive policy towards Afghánistán and British India.

Although General Soboleff's publication may not be, strictly speaking, an official work, yet, as may be seen from the following announcements regarding it which have appeared not once, but several times in the *Novoye Vremya*, it has been stamped with the approval of the Russian Military Authorities, and it has further been recommended for the perusal of every officer and soldier in the Russian Army.

The object, too, of the issue of a work of this description is very clearly revealed in the second of the two announcements which have been taken from the columns of the newspaper above quoted.

I.—"Issue No. VI:

"The Anglo-Afghán Struggle, compiled by Major-General L. N. Soboleff.

"Issues Nos. I, II, III, IV, and V* have been recommended by Circulars of the General Staff, Nos. 219 and 270 of 1882.

"Issues Nos. VII and VIII (the last) are now in the Press.

II.—"Afghánistán, India, Russia, and England:

"The Anglo-Afghán Struggle, Major-General Soboleff's work.

"The object of this work, which is concluded by the 8th issue, is to elucidate the power of the English in India, and the strategical value of Afghánistán (Herát, Kandahár, Kábul, and Bálkh).

* A condensed translation of these will be found in the following pages.—W. E. G.

"To the work are attached 9 maps and plans, including a large map of Afghánistán on 2 sheets.

"In 13 Appendices is comprised geographical and historical information, and in the 13th the question concerning a campaign against India is examined. It concludes with a geographical and historical dictionary.

"The work is explanatory of the close connection between the Eastern Question and the reciprocal relations between Russia and England in Central Asia."

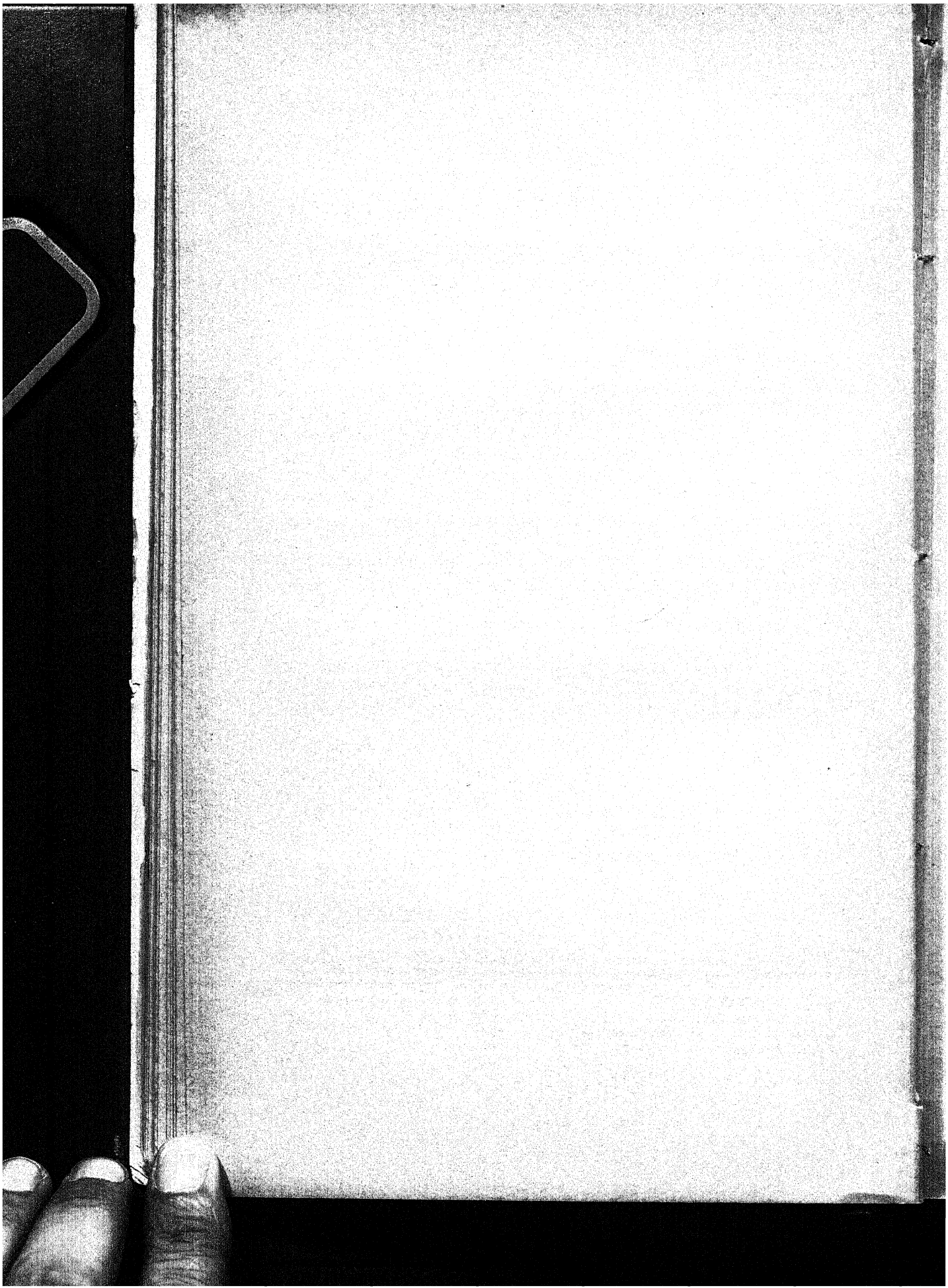
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M 477.

THE ANGLO-AFGHÁN STRUGGLE.

(SKETCH OF THE WAR OF 1879-80.)

PART I.

GEOGRAPHICAL, TOPOGRAPHICAL, HISTORICAL, AND STATISTICAL.

1. Territorial divisions of Afghánistán.

Afghánistán having had, in the reign of the late Amir, Shír-Ali-Khán, no uniform organisation, was divided into four principal provinces, *viz.*, (1), Afghán-Turkistán, *i.e.*, the country lying to the north of the Hindu-Kush (Bámián excepted); (2), the Herát province; (3), Southern Afghánistán, or the governorship of Kandahar; and (4), the province of Kábul.

The last-mentioned province is sub-divided into three distinct parts: Káfiristán, or the province of Kábul proper and Ghazni.* All these parts are again divided into more minute portions, and further Káfiristán is broken up into several principalities which enjoy the greatest amount of home independence; indeed, in some cases, this is almost complete. The Káfirs and the Mussulmáns entertain reciprocal hatred, the one towards the other. In order to illustrate the recent operations of the Anglo-Indian Force, we consider it necessary to here insert a short description of the Kábul plain.†

The Kábul plain.

This plain is bounded on the west by the Pagmán range, on the east by a chain of steep mountains on the right bank of the Khurd-Kábul river, on the north by Kohistán, on the south by the hilly edge of the Ghazni plateau, in north latitude approximately 34°. The greatest length of this plateau is 74 miles, its average width being about 40 miles.

Almost in the centre of this plain stands the town of Kábul, at an elevation of 6,400 feet above the level of the sea.

The village of Butkhák lies on the eastern extremity of the Kábul plateau, at a height of 6,247 feet above the sea.

* The province of Jalálábád has also a certain degree of independence.—*Author.*

† This description is compiled from Professor V. V. Grigorieff's excellent work entitled *Kábulistán and Káfiristán.* To it has long been turned the attention of *savants*, both of Western Europe and our own country. We recommend it, too, to military men who are engaged in the study of Central Asia, or who are interested in the *Eastern Question*, as a book of great importance.—*Author.*

The village of Maidán, distant from 20 to 23 miles to the south-west of Kábul, is 7,749 feet above the level of the sea.

The village of Sheikhábád,* distant between 40 and 46 miles from Kábul, is 7,473 feet above the sea; consequently the Kábul plain inclines from west to east and from south to north. The country which we are describing is not a plain in the general acceptation of the term.

Professor V. V. Grigorieff says that the expression "plain" can only be applied to Kábul in comparison with the hilly country surrounding it and with the general profile of Kábulistán; it, in fact, very little resembles a plain, being crossed in all directions by ridges of greater or less elevation. Further on he says: "The so-called plain comprises masses of bare crags, on which, on account of the want of vegetable soil, there is neither forest growth nor turf. Here and there only are seen clumps of thorn bushes, and in a few places there grow fragrant grasses, whilst in the gorges where trickle the mountain springs there are a few groves of mulberry, chinár and almond trees, and oleanders. The table-land stretching between these mountain ridges, wherever no irrigation is carried on, presents the appearance of a melancholy and barren steppe; but wherever the presence of rivers or streams permits of the soil becoming moist, the same steppe is turned into a green meadow; on the corn-growing land the sight is enlivened by a number of fruit and garden trees."

2. Administrative divisions of the Kábul province.

In an administrative sense the Kábul plain is divided into four circles or *tapas:* Logar to the south, Butkhák to the east, Pagmán to the south-west, and Koh-Dáman to the north-west.

The Logar Circle, through which General Roberts' Force marched, is situated on both banks of the Logar stream, which flows into the Kábul-Daria. The Logar stream supplies such an abundance of canal water that this valley is considered to be one of the most important granaries of the province of Kábul. Grain and orchard produce are abundant. General Roberts therefore very reasonably reckoned on this valley for the collection of the necessary provisions for his troops. The Logar valley is dotted over with Afghán villages, which lie quite close to each other. The appearance of this valley is that of a plain from 3 to 4 miles wide towards the south, near Khisarek, and thickly covered with vineyards, orchards, and corn-fields. The east side of the valley adjoins a vast elevated steppe, and to the west it is flanked by a chain of low but rocky heights, which are almost destitute of vegetation.

The Butkhák Circle comprises the tract to the west of the Kharkachai, and to the east of the Siáh-Koh ranges and that portion of the

*Between the villages of Maidán and Sheikhábád the distance is 18 miles. These villages were visited by the Anglo-Indian Army which marched from Ghazni to Kábul in 1839. Between them lies a vast plain, and on it is Kala-i-Shír-Muhammad, which stands at a height of 8,051 feet above the sea.—*Author.*

Kábul plain between the Logar and Koh-Dáman Circles. According to Masson, Butkhák is a large agricultural village surrounded by walls. It is 10 miles from Kábul. Between Butkhák and the city of Kábul stretches a plain which in the spring season is inundated by the waters of the Logar stream. "This plain," we read in Professor Grigorieff's book, "embraces the city of Kábul on the south, north, and north-west, *viz.*, to the south extends the Beni-Hissár meadow, to the south-east the Shiwáki meadow and beyond it the Bargam meadow, to the east is the Siáh-Sang meadow, to the north the Bímáru meadow, to the north-west the Wazirábád meadow." During the spring season, when the snows melt, these meadows are under water, and are turned into lakes or impassable and very dangerous bogs, and when the flood season has been a very strong one, these bogs last the whole summer and autumn, and are the fruitful source of fevers.

The Pagmán Circle takes its name from the little-known town of Pagmán. In this circle is situated the well-cultivated Maidán valley, with its gardens and groups of villages and numerous canals fed by the Kábul river. In this valley are raised excellent wheat and rice, and during the winter in its villages are collected vast stores of hay and straw. The Pagmán Circle is traversed by a road leading from the city of Kábul to the Bámián Pass.

The Koh-Dáman Circle comprises the north-west portion of the Kábul plain. Through it lie roads leading from the city of Kábul to the mountain valleys of Gorband and Panj-Sher, from which more than 12 passes lead into the valley of the Amu-Daria. The northern portion of the Pagmán Circle produces quantities of rice, maize, and other grain, all kinds of vegetables and fodder grasses. Its fruit is especially famous, and is taken in large quantities to India. In Professor Grigorieff's work, which we have already quoted, the following account of it is given: "its delicious fruit, its healthy climate, its picturesque dells with their luxuriant grass and fresh water and a dark back-ground of the Pagmán heights, towered by the snowy peaks of the Hindu-Kush, make the Koh-Dáman Circle a favourite summer residence of the rich, and a boastful subject for every native of Kábulistán." To the English, of course, it was of the utmost importance that they could in this part of Kábul get forage, fuel, and provisions.

From this short sketch of the Kábul plain it will be seen that the valleys which surround it are thickly populated, that they are excellently cultivated and abundantly watered, and that they therefore contain all the victualling resources necessary for a force of not merely 5,000* men, but of a whole Army Corps. General Roberts knew this very well and

* The English force which occupied Kábul was reckoned at 6,600 men, but, from the more exact estimate to which we have already referred, we believe that the fighting strength did not exceed 5,000.—*Author.*

therefore did not fear to run the risk, after cutting off his communications with the Shutur-Gardan, of establishing a temporary base in this fruitful country.

AFGHÁNISTÁN.

3. A short sketch of her History, Geography, and Statistics.

In Europe, by the name Afghánistán is understood to mean that portion of the continent of Asia in which, for the last 130 years, have reigned the Duráni and Barakzai dynasties.

With the exception of her northern provinces, which lie in the valley of the Amu-Daria, Afghánistán formed the north-eastern portion of Khurássán and the most important part of the territory of the Persian Emperors. Biluchistán, which adjoins Afghánistán, comprised the south-eastern portion of Khurássán. In Asia the name "Afghánistán" is scarcely ever used. Indeed, Afghánistán is divided into numerous provinces which have for the most part retained their ancient designation; a portion of these are called after the people which inhabit them. Some of these again have several large sub-divisions with certain well-marked distinctions. The chief of these are: Rokh and Kábul, Zábul and Seistán, Gari and Ghur, Bálkh and Badákhshán. The two last have a real signification, but the first six comprise three groups. The limits of these sub-divisions have not been clearly ascertained. Thus Rokh and Kábul often refer to one and the same country, and a portion of Rokh may comprise what is known as Kábul, but not the reverse.

History.

The Afghán tribes are referred to in history for the first time during the VIIth century B.C., when they settled in the province of Ghur (Herát) in Eastern Khurássán. Here it was that they were conquered by Alexander the Great, and here also they embraced Islám. Their ancient history up to this epoch is not known. The origin of the Afgháns, as traced from one of the ten lost tribes of Israel, is doubtful. The historical knowledge of Afghánistán began to be much more defined from the date of the introduction into the country of Muhammadanism, which drove out all other religions. Thus it is known that in the IXth century A.D., the Afgháns possessed the north-eastern portion of Afghánistán proper. In the Xth century Máhmud of Ghazni assumed the title of Sultán, acquired great renown both as a warrior and as a zealous adherent of Islám, organised an army, and began energetically to conquer the adjacent countries. In the year 1000 A.D., he invaded India and speedily established an empire which extended from the Caspian Sea to the River Ganges. In the popular memory he is famous under the name of "the destroyer." He introduced Islámism

into India for the first time and created in that country a new and powerful social force. After devastating the whole of Upper India by a series of inroads, Máhmud of Ghazni, at the head of his troops, put to flight all the armies arrayed against him, overthrew the reigning dynasties of the country, and became the monarch of an immense sovereignty. His armies, skilfully led, overcame all obstacles, either on the part of nature or the people of India. He made Ghazni the capital of his empire, and he adorned it with buildings of various kinds, and collected in it the boundless wealth which he had seized in India. In the year 1030 A.D. Máhmud died. His children and his grand-children overthrew in civil war the structure raised up by the great Afghán. The empire fell to pieces and the wealth of Ghazni was plundered right and left. In 1159 A.D., Muhammad-Guri, of the Afghán race, destroyed Ghazni and laid the foundation of the new dynasty of the Gurides, from which sprang a colossal empire that extended from the Tigris to the Ganges. This dynasty, in the course of its incessant wars, often lost its home possessions.

The famous Mongol leader, Chingiz-Khán, during his tempestuous triumph, conquered Afghánistán, but his rule did not last very long.

Timur-Lang (Tamarlane), who had become the possessor of the whole of Central Asia, advanced to conquer Afghánistán and occupied Kandahar and Kábul. Thence he turned towards India, where he possessed himself of the city of Delhi. But he very soon quitted India. One of his descendants, the famous Sultán Babar, ruler of Farghána (Khokand), in 1506 A.D. moved with his army towards the south, effected the passage of the Amu-Daria, crossed the Hindu-Kush, and took Afghánistán, making Kábul his capital. In the year 1525 A.D. he marched to India, and having taken Delhi, laid the foundation of the dynasty of the Great Moguls. This dynasty, whilst preserving its Indian possessions, often lost Afghánistán, which at length passed into the hands of the Persians. In the middle of the XVIIth century the Sháh of Persia, Abbas the Great, invaded Afghánistán, and in 1650 conquered Kandahar.

Up to the beginning of the XVIIIth century, Afghánistán remained a part of the Persian dynatsy of the Sefevides. Driven to desperation by the exactions of their Persian rulers, the freedom-loving Afgháns rose up, under the leadership of one of their Sirdárs, Mir-Uveis, drove out the Persians, and elected this Sirdár as their sovereign.

In 1715, on the death of Mir-Uveis, his son, Mir-Máhmud, was invited to ascend the throne. In revenge for the former subjugation of his country, Mir-Máhmud invaded Persia and conquered it in the year 1722. He then overthrew the dynasty of the Sefevides and seized the throne of the Sháh. At this epoch one Nádir had acquired a vast influence amongst the Tekke-Turkumáns. His adherents being warlike and

brave, Nádir resolved to boldly take advantage of the existing disorder in Persia. Meanwhile Mir-Máhmud died, and the throne passed into the hands of his son, Atraf. Now both the father and the son were distinguished for their extreme severity, and this had excited the deep hatred of the Persians towards them. Having collected his forces, Nádir undertook a campaign against Persia. He then deprived Atraf of his power and thereupon entered into a war with the Turks, whom he defeated, and in 1737 was proclaimed Emperor of Persia. Soon after this he conquered Afghánistán, and then, being impelled by a thirst for military renown, he directed his armies towards distant India. For some years he ruled over a monarchy containing 70,000,000 inhabitants, comprising Persia, Afghánistán, the Central Asian Khánates, and Northern India, including the cities of Lahore and Delhi. But Nádir-Sháh's dominion was short-lived, since it only lasted between the years 1737 and 1747. During this period, moreover, he scarcely ever dismounted from his war horse. Although possessed of little intelligence, Nádir-Sháh displayed the true instincts of an Asiatic conqueror. On capturing the flourishing city of Delhi, the capital of the Great Moguls, he consigned it to the flames. At the time of capturing this city Nádir-Sháh summoned to his presence Muhammad-Sháh, grandson of the famous Aurangzebe and the defeated sovereign. Muhammad-Sháh had an unfortunate habit of wearing a turban set with the famous diamond which had served as the subject of the Hindu poem of the Maha-Baráta. This brilliant, a thousand years before, had belonged to the hero of one of the great Hindu fights. Nádir-Sháh, captivated by the exceeding glitter of the stone and by its surprising size, expressed the wish to exchange turbans with Muhammad-Sháh, and of course the latter had to consent. From this period the stone went by the name of the "Koh-i-Nur." Later on we shall mention how it passed into the crown of the English monarchs.

In the ranks of Nádir-Sháh's army the Afgháns displayed the valour and bravery of true warriors. In 1747 Nádir-Sháh was killed and his monarchy soon fell to pieces. One of his commanders, Ahmad-Abdullah, an Afghán, having obtained possession of the greater portion of the wealth of the deceased Nádir-Sháh, including the "Koh-i-Nur" diamond, appeared at the head of 3,000 horsemen and captured the town of Kandahar. Having assumed the title of Sháh Dur-i-Duráni, *i.e.*, "the Pearl of the Age," he was crowned sovereign. The Afghán race, to which Ahmad-Abdullah belonged, began from this time to be called the *Duránis*. Ahmad-Abdullah reigned 26 years. During his reign the limits of Afghánistán were considerably extended, and reached on the north as far as the river Amu-Daria, and on the south the mouths of the Indus and the sea. In his sovereignty he included the whole of the province of Pesháwar, and he twice took the city of Delhi.

In 1773 he was succeeded by his son, Timur, a drunkard and a voluptuary. Of Timur it was said that he was never without wine in one hand and a mistress in the embrace of the other arm. After losing the greater portion of the possessions acquired by his father, he died in the year 1793. During his reign the Sikhs gained a powerful influence in the Panjáb. His successor, Sháh-Zamán, entered on the path from which it is difficult to draw off the rulers of Afghánistán, and which will lead to the complete subjugation of Southern and Central Afghánistán by the English. Sháh-Zamán also entered into close relations with the famous *Tippoo-Sáhib, who was drawn into Napoleon's project for the conquest of India.* He wrote to a distinguished native of India: "Pray God that the English may fall to the irresistible swords of devout warriors." The Anglo-Indian Government was seized with a panic, and it decided to repel by force the danger which threatened it. From this time the fate of Afghánistán was sealed. In 1800 Sháh-Zamán was hurled from his throne by his brother Máhmud, and was deprived of his sight. The English gave him an asylum at Ludhiána and allowed him a pension. In 1802 Máhmud was, in his turn, ousted by his brother, Shuja-Ul-Mulk. In 1808 the English appeared for the first time at the Court of the Amirs of Afghánistán. Elphinstone was at the head of this first embassy. The object of this mission was the conclusion of an alliance with Afghánistán against Persia in the event of Napoleon's influence and that of the Russian Emperor, Alexander I, compelling the Persian Sháh to enter into a compact directed against the power of the English in India.

An alliance was concluded, but, in the year 1809, the weak and intriguing Sháh-Shuja was driven from Kábul, and his brother Máhmud was again made Amir. In reality, however, the power lay in the hands of the influential Wazir, Fateh-Khán, the head of the Barakzai family. Sháh-Shuja, who carried away with him the precious Koh-i-Nur diamond, fled to Káshmir and thence found refuge with the famous Sikh sovereign, Ranjit-Singh. He forced Sháh-Shuja to exchange the Koh-i-Nur for the income derived from three villages. The Afghán sorrowfully parted with the diamond, and, in giving it up to Ranjit, observed that the price of the stone was immeasurable, for he who owned it always vanquished his enemies. We may here remark that, with the overthrow of the Sikh monarchy, the Koh-i-Nur passed into the possession of the English, and that it now adorns the crown of the sovereigns of Great Britain. Hurt by his treatment at the hands of Ranjit-Singh, Sháh-Shuja came to the English, who sent him, with a pension, to Ludhiána. He now became the tool of English intrigue directed against Afghánistán. The powerful Fateh-Khán had by this time aroused the hatred of the relatives of the reigning Amir, Máhmud. In 1818, whilst at Herát, the Wazir was deprived of his eye-sight by Máhmud's son,

Kamrán, and then, in the presence of Máhmud, whom he had so befriended, he was cut in pieces. Azam-Khán and Dost-Muhammad-Khán, brothers of the murdered Wazir, now took up arms, and there soon raged a civil war throughout Afghánistán.

The Sikhs took advantage of this state of affairs and occupied Multán, Káshmir, Dera-Gházi-Khán, and Dera-Ismail-Khán. In the course of the strife now raging throughout Afghánistán, the afterwards famous Dost-Muhammad made a name for himself. Having collected an army in Káshmir, he advanced on Kábul which he occupied without opposition. Azam-Khán proclaimed Ayub-Khán, Sháh-Shuja's brother, Amir, but Dost-Muhammad's choice fell upon Sultán-Ali. The latter having died soon afterwards, Dost-Muhammad determined to seize the power for himself, and with this view he declared war against his brother Azam-Khán. After Azam-Khán's defeat and death, Dost-Muhammad-Khán made no secret of his intentions, and accordingly proclaimed himself Amir of Afghánistán in 1823, and by this act he laid the foundation of the ruling dynasty of the Barakzais. Ranjit-Singh once more took advantage of Afghán dissensions and acquired Pesháwar. The Amir of Bukhára availed himself of the same opportunity and annexed the province of Bálkh. The Duráni dynasty had now terminated its existence.

At Kábul Dost-Muhammad reigned, at Kandahar his brother Kokhán-Dil-Khán, at Herát a third brother. The brothers ruled their provinces almost independently of each other, though they acknowledged Dost-Muhammad as their nominal head. Soon, however, Kokhán-Dil-Khán became involved in a quarrel with Dost-Muhammad, and then Sháh-Shuja, urged on by the English, invaded Southern Afghánistán from India and laid siege to Kandahar. On his defeat by Dost-Muhammad, Sháh-Shuja fled back to India. In his desire to wrest Pesháwar from the Sikhs, Dost-Muhammad invaded the Panjáb, but suffered a defeat. He then appealed to the Viceroy of India for aid against the powerful Ranjit-Singh.

The Viceroy's Government answered craftily, declaring that it was not its custom to interfere in the affairs of independent sovereigns. At this time in Afghánistán, thanks to Dost-Muhammad's wisdom, an unusual reign of order had been introduced, trade had been developed, confidence in the endurance of the throne established, and persons and their property received the protection of the law. Dost-Muhammad, with characteristic frankness, intimated to the Indian Government that he held the firm resolve of uniting in one sovereignty all the territory which the Duráni dynasty had owned, and he asked the English to further his resolve. Following in the footsteps of the Khalifs, he assumed the title of Amir, an appellation which primarily possessed a religious signification. The English, whilst repudiating a policy of interference, had in reality every intention of upsetting the plans of

Dost-Muhammad, justly seeing in them an awakening of the Mussulmán world and a consequent threatening of their rule in India. With the arrival in India of a new Viceroy, Lord Auckland, the Afghán Amir again tried his fortune, and sent a letter asking for assistance in uniting Afghánistán. At the end of this communication Dost-Muhammad declared that, if co-operation were refused him, he would turn for assistance to that other power which was a rival for the ownership of Hindustán. By his mention of Russia, Dost-Muhammad exasperated Lord Auckland and impelled him to hasten his interference in Afghán affairs. In his answer to the Amir, dated the 22nd August 1836, the Viceroy pretended that he knew nothing about Dost-Muhammad's quarrel with the Sikhs, and said the English Government did not interfere in the affairs of independent sovereigns.

To this epoch relate the travels through Afghánistán and Central Asia of Burnes and other Englishmen, whose aim was to ascertain the state of those countries and to endeavour to find out the plans of the Russian Government with regard to the Uzbak Khánates. Captain Burnes accomplished, during the years 1831-1833, his remarkable journey to Bukhára, and during that period he several times visited the Court of Dost-Muhammad-Khán. He was entrusted with the arrangement of a trade treaty with Afghánistán. The Amir made several proposals to Burnes, but the English envoy so delayed his replies that Dost-Muhammad became uneasy and annoyed. At length, having lost all patience, *he made*, through the Russian Ensign Vitkevitch, who chanced to be at Kábul at the time, *offers of alliance with Russia*. Dost-Muhammad's eyes were now directed to far-off St. Petersburg. Finally Burnes made several promises, which, however, the Indian Government would not endorse. After the receipt of a very sharp letter from Lord Auckland, dated 20th January 1838, Dost-Muhammad, in his anger, made the following remark to Burnes: "I came to your door, but you refused me admittance. It is true that Russia is a long way off, but through Persia, which belongs to the White Tsár, as does India to you, Russia will help me." The infuriated Burnes was now convinced that at Afghánistán a blow must at once be struck, and so he left Kábul on the 26th August 1838. The Viceroy, dreading a Russo-Persian alliance, without awaiting orders from London undertook all measures for averting a danger which he did not clearly understand. In India the approach of Russian troops was awaited and the Head Quarter Staff was in a state of feverish activity. Vast plans were concocted for the conquest of Afghánistán and for the movement of Anglo-Indian troops to meet the Russians in the valley of the Amu-Daria and in Persia. An alliance was concluded with Ranjit-Singh, who undertook to furnish an auxiliary force and to aid the march of the Anglo-Indian Army of Operations. It was proposed, too, to place Sháh-Shuja on the throne of Kábul, in the room

of Dost-Muhammad, on condition that he would not demand Pesháwar from the Sikhs and that he would not interfere in Herát affairs. Thus the essence of the plan consisted in breaking up Afghánistán and subjecting the disjointed parts to English control.

The autumn of 1838 was taken up with the formation of an Anglo-Indian Army of Operation numbering, with the Sikh contingent, 54,000 men. On the 10th October 1838, war was declared against Afghánistán. The English troops advanced in three columns. The Bengal, or main column, of a strength of 9,500 men, with 38,000 camp-followers and 30,000 camels, was concentrated at Ferozpur. On being joined by Sháh-Shuja's force, of 6,000 men, it advanced to Shikarpur, where it was met by the Bombay column, of a strength of 5,600 men. The objective point of both these columns was the city of Kandahar. The third column, consisting of Ranjit-Singh's troops and a small English detachment, was directed against Kábul. The Bengal and Bombay columns, with considerable difficulty and after suffering great losses, arrived at the Bolán Pass on the 6th March 1839. Having met with no opposition, the English continued their march. By this time 20,000 camels had fallen, and the fighting line of the force had been reduced to a strength of 11,000 of all ranks. After occupying Kandahar the English proclaimed Sháh-Shuja Amir of Afghánistán, and in his honour a salute of 101 guns were fired. Later on 5,000 men were marched towards Ghazni, which was captured after a fight in which the English lost 17 officers and 147 rank and file. Dost-Muhammad, on hearing of the fall of Ghazni, and having no hope of holding out at Kábul, fled to the north of the Hindu-Kush. Kábul, therefore, fell to the English almost without a fight on the 7th August 1839. Sháh-Shuja was then triumphantly conducted to the Bála-Hissár, the residence of the Amirs of Afghánistán. The people regarded the State ceremony in silence. English detachments had been left at Kandahar and Ghazni, and for a time the Duráni dynasty had been restored to Afghánistán. Soon an English detachment had occupied the Bámián and was ready to advance its pickets far into the Hindu-Kush. At the same time a Russian expedition was preparing to march against Khiva. By November 1839 Russian troops had moved from Orenburg southwards, and all India was alarmed.

In the meantime the Afghán populace had recovered its senses whilst Dost-Muhammad issued a proclamation calling upon the people to fight against his enemies. His son, Akbar-Khán, displayed special energy. Throughout the country there now began to be displayed an attitude distinctly hostile to the English; indeed, there were manifest signs of a popular rising, and Kábul was in a state of commotion. The ejected Amir decided on measuring his strength with the English in the open field, and so he again appeared on the south of the Hindu-Kush amidst his adherents from amongst the mountain population of Kohistán. An

English force was sent against him, and the whole of October was wasted in vain efforts to overcome Dost-Muhammad's following.

At last, on the 2nd (14th) November, Dost-Muhammad, at the head of his brave Kohistánis, inflicted on the English a severe defeat at Parwán-Dara. The news of this Afghán victory produced a profound impression in the English camp. The English Resident in Afghánistán, the ill-fated MacNaghten, whose authority was unlimited, but who never seemed able to come to any decision, for several days after the Parwán-Dara affair remained in a state of vacillation, confining his exercise on horse-back to the precincts of the English camp, which was pitched outside the walls of Kábul. On one such occasion he became aware that several horsemen were approaching him. One of them, having drawn his sword hurriedly handed it to MacNaghten and declared that he was Dost-Muhammad, and that he would surrender himself unconditionally to the enemies of his native land. The terrified Resident muttered a few words, took the sword, and then directed that the famous Barakzai should be arrested and banished to India. This was the most grievous mistake that the English committed throughout the campaign, as the people were undoubtedly devoted to Dost-Muhammad, and he might have been made use of to avert a popular rising. From that moment fortune changed for the English, and their position in Afghánistán now became dangerous. Dull murmuring followed the banishment of the deposed Amir. MacNaghten, Burnes, and the Commander-in-Chief, General Elphinstone, though warned of an insurrection, did not believe in the possibility of a catastrophe. Many of the officers had sent for their families to Kábul, had ordered from India furniture and other articles of luxury, and were living in the city in the greatest comfort. Burnes kept a harem there and the Afgháns were affronted. The Ghilzais headed the insurrectionary movement, and their leader, Hamza-Khán, was obviously imposing on the English. Still MacNaghten continued to deny that the Afghán people were hostile to them. In short his error was complete.

On the 2nd (14th) November 1841, the anniversary of Dost-Muhammad's victory at Parwán-Dara, a fearful insurrection broke out at Kábul. Trade ceased, the shops were shut up, and the people took up arms. Those English and their families who lived in the city were murdered, and amongst the victims was Burnes. At this time there were in the English camp before Kábul about 6,000 men and 12,000 camp-followers, the greater number of whom were armed. The receipt in camp of the news of the murder of the English residents in the city did not call forth on the part of the English leaders any energy, but only produced a panic amongst them. General Elphinstone, who was prostrated by a grievous disease, was incapable of displaying the courage required of a military leader. The Afghán regiments which had been enrolled by the English from amongst the Kohistánis, and which were quartered at a

distance of 5½ miles from the city, murdered their English officers and joined the insurgent populace. Stimulated by the unaccountable indecision of the English, the Afgháns threw themselves into the English camp and took possession of the magazines. The rank and file of the English force, seeing such a display of boldness on the part of the Afgháns, became infuriated, but as no one led them, they fell into a state of dejection. The thought was put forward of retiring on Jalálábád, but MacNaghten rose up against it. At this time Akbar-Khán, Dost-Muhammad's son, came to Kábul. On the 22nd November (4th December) a portion of the English troops, having attempted to occupy the village of Bemáru, were driven back by the Afgháns. In December negotiations were opened with the Afghán chiefs regarding an unopposed withdrawal of the English to India and the supply of their troops with provisions. The Afgháns demanded the surrender of the forts and promised to give the supplies. The English thereupon evacuated the forts, but the supplies were not forthcoming. The Afgháns now called upon the English to lay down their arms. MacNaghten, who had by this time become convinced that everything was going wrong, decided to negotiate with the Afgháns regarding the evacuation of the whole of Afghánistán and the restoration of Dost-Muhammad. But Akbar-Khán was too cunning to assent to this. He proposed that Sháh-Shuja's authority should be upheld in Kábul, provided he himself was made Wazir. If, he said, the English would consent to this arrangement, he would allow them to winter in the city of Kábul. On the 23rd December 1841 (4th January 1842) the English camp was surrounded by a large crowd of Afgháns. The English were now thoroughly alarmed, but Akbar-Khán sent word to MacNaghten not to have any misgiving, because the people who had collected were those who were to take part in the negotiations. Akbar-Khán now demanded a personal interview with the English Resident, and accordingly MacNaghten, with 3 English officers and 16 soldiers, went out towards the Afghán, who was sitting on a mound near the English camp. At a given signal the English were seized and their arms were taken from them.

In the sight of the whole English camp MacNaghten, who was of powerful physique, entered into a personal conflict with Akbar-Khán, but he was dragged away by the Afgháns and shot by Akbar-Khán's own hand with a pistol which he had himself given to his murderer. The body of the hated Resident, who had affronted the popular pride and the family honour of the Afgháns, was hacked to pieces, and each piece was subjected to insult.

Akbar-Khán now derisively informed the English leaders that this unfortunate occurrence need not interrupt the negotiations which had been begun. The English could only remain silent and give up, as demanded by the Afgháns, a stipulated sum, some hostages, and all

their guns. It was now decided to begin the evacuation of the country.

On the 6th (18th) January 1842 the English troops struck camp. Their force at this time consisted of 4,500 men and 12,000 camp-followers. The mountains and valleys were covered with deep snow, the English had no provisions, though the Afgháns had promised to give them some. After a march of 4 miles the English force, jaded and hungry, made a halt, as all were suffering from the cold. The several portions of the force got mixed up, and every semblance of order had disappeared. As they came to the place selected for the night, the men lay down on the snow. On the morning of the following day the usual *reveillé* did not sound. Each one got up as he liked and wandered on. The English force had in fact become a disorderly crowd. The men, worn out with fatigue, began to fall behind and so perished under the knives of the Afgháns, until at last the latter made open attacks on their retreating foe.

General Elphinstone, having complained of the perfidy which had been shown by the Afgháns, Akbar-Khán's agents endeavoured to pacify him. During the second day of the retreat 500 soldiers and 2,500 camp-followers perished. On the same day the English force had not advanced more than 1½rd miles before it was summoned by the Afgháns to halt. Having by this time lost all sense of military honour the English obeyed. Akbar-Khán now demanded that all the married men with their wives and children should be given up to him. This order also was obeyed. The English then received an order to halt on the spot for the night. The next day they continued their march. With the greatest difficulty, the unfortunate detachment succeeded in reaching the Khurd-Kábul Pass. Here on the 10th (22nd) January 1842, an ambuscade had been prepared. Akbar-Khán now assured the English that he was no longer able to restrain the ferocity of the Ghilzais, and that they must at once lay down their arms. General Elphinstone would not consent to this extremely humiliating demand, and marched his force onwards. His men, however, at once fell under a cross fire. By night-fall the English detachment had reached the Pass of Jagdalak. Hunger had now reached such incredible lengths amongst them that the men devoured snow and threw themselves upon raw meat.

Akbar-Khán having ordered General Elphinstone to appear before him with 2 officers, the General obeyed and was made a prisoner. In vain they expected his return to the detachment, for the commander would no longer appear amongst his troops. At this time there remained of the English detachment not more than 280 armed men, and the Ghilzais were still shooting at this handful of men. Only 20 officers, 45 European soldiers, and 100 camp-followers reached Gandamak, and on these the Afgháns now made a rush. Selecting a position on the

nearest mound, the remnants of the English force beat back every attack made upon them. The Afgháns then made a sign of putting forward a flag of truce, and the English firing ceased. The commander of the party, Captain Kaye held out for a free passage to Jalálábád. The Afgháns hereupon drew near to the English and engaged in a friendly conversation, but all at once they threw themselves on the armed men and tried to seize their muskets, but they were driven back at the point of the bayonet. The firing was then resumed. Of the English there were now only 30 men remaining, and many of these were wounded. The Afgháns, having drawn their long knives, rushed at the survivors and destroyed them nearly all. The English force had in fact practically ceased to exist.

On the 13th (25th) January, from the walls of the Fort of Jalálábád was seen wending his way the wounded and jaded Dr. Bryden. He brought the terrible news of the destruction of the entire English force save himself and about 150 men who were prisoners.

Meanwhile Sháh-Shuja's position had become critical. The people demanded that he should put himself at the head of the struggle with the English. He made a show of so doing and started for Jalálábád. On the road he was shot by his fellow-tribesmen, who stripped his body of the clothes and jewels, &c., and flung it into a ditch. At Kábul civil war had broken out, but on his return Akbar-Khán made peace between the opposing parties, and Sháh-Shuja's son, Fateh-Jang, a weak and dissolute man, was elected Amir of Kábul. Akbar-Khán was at the same time chosen as Wazir.

Lord Auckland was recalled by the Court of Directors of the East India Company, and Lord Ellenborough was sent out in his place. The terrible news of the destruction of the English force produced a disquieting impression in Calcutta and throughout England. The idea of the fresh conquest of Afghánistán no longer entered any one's head. In fact the question of saving the English dominion in India was involved, for the Kábul catastrophe had produced deep disquietude amongst the Indian population, and the native army of India had fallen into such a state of demoralisation that General Pollock could not advance with his force to reinforce the Fort of Jalálábád, which was being subjected to fierce attacks on the part of Akbar-Khán.

General Sale had held on to Jalálábád in spite of General Elphinstone's order that he was to evacuate it. In like manner General Nott had disregarded the instructions sent him by the Commander-in-Chief and remained at Kandahar.

The garrison of Ghazni, after sustaining a four months' siege, was at length obliged to capitulate, and though it left the place with arms in its hands, it shared the fate of the Kábul force, for the rank and file were all killed and the officers made prisoners.

In order to supply the Kandahar column with provisions, a detachment was sent from Sukkur, under the command of General England. On meeting with some slight opposition in the Khojak Pass, General England retreated to Quetta, where he hastily intrenched himself. But General Nott ordered him to move forward, and this time he reached Kandahar in safety.

After these events, the new Viceroy directed all Afghán territory to be evacuated and the English troops to return to India. The motive for this order was the necessity of having an army in India, where affairs might easily bring about a situation that would threaten English rule in that country. The order enraged General Nott in the highest degree, and he resolved to march to revenge what had happened at Kábul. Generals Sale and Pollock likewise turned a deaf ear to the orders of the Viceroy. It was then settled that General Nott's force should return to India by way of Ghazni and Kábul. Nott, having been nominated Commander-in-Chief, directed Generals Sale and Pollock to join him at Kábul.

On the 7th (19th) August 1842 Kandahar was evacuated by the English. A portion of its garrison under General England was sent back to India *viâ* Quetta, and General Nott, at the head of 7,000 men, marched towards the north-east and defeated the Afgháns before Ghazni. Meanwhile General Pollock had joined General Sale at Jalálábád, and both Generals, whose united forces amounted to 8,000 men, advanced on Kábul in August 1842.

At Jagdalak and at Khurd-Kábul they defeated the Afgháns, whereupon Akbar-Khán fled to the mountains. On the 15th (27th) September, Generals Pollock and Sale entered Kábul, and the next day the force under General Nott also reached that city. The united English forces now amounted to 15,000 men. In revenge for the destruction of General Elphinstone's detachment, Kábul was committed to the flames. The English army ravaged the place for three days, and the splendid bazár, which had been spared by Timur-Lang, was destroyed. The captive English, thanks to the kind heart of the Afghán, Zamán, under whose charge they had been placed, were restored to the English, and thus the aged General Sale was rejoiced by the recovery of his daughter.

On the 12th (24th) October 1842, the English flag was hoisted on the walls of the Bála-Hissár, the citadel of Kábul, and then the British force began its march towards India. With the English troops Sháh-Shuja's family quitted Kábul, except the eldest son of the deceased, whom the Indian Government recognised as the chosen sovereign of the Afghán people. Afghán horsemen followed the retiring English troops, and took every opportunity of attacking them. A portion of the English transport-train was cut off, and the English troops, as they hurried

along the route where General Elphinstone's detachment was destroyed, were unable even to bury the corpses of their fallen comrades.

Many murmured with justice at this, but it could not be, and so the desire of the English troops to pay this last compliment to their fallen dead was not fulfilled.

Soon Afghánistán was finally evacuated, and the English troops returned to their respective stations. The Viceroy breathed with freedom and the English ministry rejoiced to have got rid so cheaply of the terrible Afghán question. General Nott alone was not content. In his opinion the national pride of the English was not appeased, and for that nothing short of *the complete subjugation of Afghánistán was required.* He was depressed because his beautiful regiments had lost a favourable opportunity of *hoisting the British standard on the shores of the Caspian Sea.* In their campaign of 1838—1842, the English had lost more than 30,000 men and over 50,000 camels, and had spent more than £10,000,000. Their dominion in India had been shaken, the independence of Afghánistán had been secured, and the power of the Sikh monarchy had been extended.

Of the raising up of any serious obstacle to the gradual advance of the Russians in Central Asia, such as Lord Auckland had conceived, no mention could be made. Affairs in this direction were now written on the pages of history, and so the English were obliged to seek out fresh measures to secure their position in India. *From this period the great Eastern Question had entered upon a new phase.* The English had seriously begun to think how they could draw off the attention of Russia from Central Asia.

On the 1st (13th) October 1842 the Viceroy issued a proclamation regarding the evacuation of Afghánistán. With derision he referred to the policy of his predecessor, and he observed how the introduction into the Government of Kábul of a foreign race was opposed to the true aspirations of Great Britain, that British India was possessed of boundaries which completely answered the requirements of the State, and that the Indian Government would direct its whole attention to the establishment and securing of order, to the protection of the Native Princes, and to the extension of the happiness of its own subjects. In a second proclamation, addressed to the Princes, Sirdárs, and people of India, the Viceroy announced that the insult inflicted on India, 800 years before, by the Sultán, Máhmud, had been wiped out, for the English troops had brought back from Ghazni the gates of the sacred temple of Somnáth. Lord Ellenborough was then recalled, and chiefly on account of the issue of this second proclamation.

As disturbances in Afghánistán continued, the English determined on the release of Dost-Muhammad-Khán, and so at Firozpur the famous Barakzai had an interview with the Viceroy. On being asked the

question as to what he thought of the British power, Dost-Muhammad replied: "I have been struck with the extent of your power, with your armies, ships, and arsenals, but what I have not been able to understand is this, why the rulers of so vast and flourishing a sovereignty should have crossed the Indus and have taken from me my poor and barren country."

In 1843 Dost-Muhammad was again made Amir of Kábul, and his brother, Kokhán-Dil-Khán, established his authority at Kandahar.

Yár-Muhammad became ruler of Herát and preserved his authority up to the year 1851. At his death it passed to his son, Saiyad-Muhammad-Khán. Kandahar and Herát retained their independence, but Dost-Muhammad was recognised the supreme sovereign of Afghánistán. Order was gradually re-introduced into the country.

Meanwhile the aggrandisement of the Sikh monarchy was not at all agreeable to the English, and so they took advantage of the disorder that prevailed at Pesháwar and declared war against the Sikhs in the year 1843. During that year a portion of the Sikh possessions was incorporated with British India, and in 1848 the second Sikh war began.

Dost-Muhammad, who thought the opportunity an easy one for the acquirement of Pesháwar, joined the Sikhs against the English, and the Afghán troops, as the allies of the Sikhs, occupied Attock. At one time the preponderance seemed to lie with the united forces, but the English victory at Gujerát on the 21st February (5th March) 1849 decided the fate of the campaign. The Sikh monarchy ceased to exist, and Dost-Muhammad fled to Kábul.

Having now abandoned all idea of the extension of his sovereignty in the direction of Pesháwar, the Amir of Kábul turned his attention to the country to the north of the Hindu-Kush. In 1850 he conquered the province of Bálkh, and in 1859 the province of Kunduz. In the same year the Mir of Badákhshán recognized Dost-Muhammad as his suzerain and consented to pay him tribute.

The Crimean campaign was made the occasion by the English for the increase of their prestige in the East and for the consolidation of their rule in India. The first thing they did was to conclude a friendly treaty with Dost-Muhammad on the 1st (13th) May 1855. The third article of this treaty thus ran: "Dost-Muhammad-Khán *Wali* (Sovereign), of Kábul and the other countries of Afghánistán, undertakes, for himself and his heirs, to respect the territory of the Honourable East India Company, and never to interfere in it, and to be the friend of the friends and the enemy of the enemies of the Honourable East India Company."

At that time the Persians were seeking to obtain possession of Herát, which has always been the dream of the Persian Sháhs. The English had then no misgivings about the increase of power to Persia on the side of

Herát, supposing that such an increase would neutralise the aggrandisement of Russia in Southern Asia and on the borders of India.

And yet scarcely was the ink dry on the Treaty of Paris when war broke out between England and Persia. On the 13th (25th) October 1856 Herát was occupied by Persian troops, and on the 4th (16th) December of the same year a portion of the Persian Gulf was occupied by an English detachment sent from India. After that Bushire was speedily taken, and on the 8th (20th) February 1857 the Persian troops were defeated at Khanáb. On the 4th (16th) March peace was signed, by which the Sháh undertook not to interfere in the affairs of Afghánistán, to respect the independence of Herát, and to seek the mediation of the British Government in the event of any disagreement with the Afgháns.

In January 1857 Dost-Muhammad had an interview with Sir John Lawrence, the result of which was that the Indian Government undertook to give him their protection and to supply him with arms and money. In return for these, Dost-Muhammad expressed his readiness to permit English officers to be sent to Kandahar, but not to Kábul.

In 1857 England, with France in tow, resolved on a war with China. *The Eastern question, in the vastness of its importance, had acquired such a signification that the English decided to take every opportunity of settling it once for all in behalf of their own interests. Into the sphere of their feverish activity entered Turkey, Persia, Afghánístán, India, and China. Great Britain had made up her mind to become the mistress of all these countries.* It would be difficult to determine how the fulfilment of this vast programme by the first Naval Power in the world was to be carried out. But the unexpected and terrible mutiny of the Sepoy Army of India, which began on the 10th (22nd) May 1857, without doubt to a great extent narrowed the plans of the English. The Sepoy Rebellion was the echo of the Crimean War and the direct result of the extremely risky foreign undertakings of England. The mutiny shook the position of the English in India, but the fortune of war favoured them, and the rising was mercilessly suppressed. The head of the mutiny was *Nana-Sáhib*, and that he is hiding in secret the people of India are convinced, also they believe that he still lives in Russia, *i.e.*, in the country whence they expect their deliverance.

To the surprise of the English themselves the Afghán Amir did not take advantage of the mutiny to interfere in what was then going on.

On the death of his brother, Kokhán-Dil-Khán, in 1854, Dost-Muhammad had obtained possession of Kandahar, and in 1862 the aged Amir decided once for all in putting an end to the independence of Herát. Having marched his troops from Kandahar, he laid siege to the city, and, after a ten months' investment, gained possession of the place.

One week afterwards Dost-Muhammad died at the age of 73. The Afghán throne now passed to his favourite son, Shir-Ali-Khán, for the famous Akbar-Khán, who was born of the same mother, had been dead since 1855. Afzul-Khán and Azam-Khán, elder brothers of Shir-Ali by another wife of the deceased Amir, did not consent to his election to the throne of Afghánistán.

Shir-Ali had received from his father a united Afghánistán, but this fact was not agreeable to the Indian Government. Shir-Ali sent a letter to the Viceroy of India informing him of his succession to the throne, and requesting the recognition and friendship of the English. This letter remained for six months without an answer, and the English had apparently forgotten all about the friendly treaty of the 1st (13th) May 1855. The Viceroy's silence was the first and perfectly undeserved insult which the young Amir's pride had to bear; the fact, too, raised the desires and hopes of the elder brothers and cousins of Shir-Ali, and induced them to dispute with him for the throne of Afghánistán.

In June 1865 civil war broke out between Afzul-Khán and Shir-Ali. The Amir came off the conqueror and peace ensued, but Abdul-Rahmán, Afzul-Khán's son, was not quieted, and he went for the time to Bukhára, and then his father was arrested.

In June 1865 a fresh war broke out in the country. This time the combatants were the Amir on the one side and Dost-Muhammad's second son, Azam-Khán, assisted by his nephew, Abdul-Rahmán, on the other. During the Amir's absence from Kábul in February 1866, Azam-Khán captured the city, and subsequently Shir-Ali, having been defeated by his rival, fled to Kandahar. Afzul-Khán was then released from captivity and proclaimed Amir of Kábul. Afghánistán now became divided into two sovereignties; the one comprising Kábul and the northern provinces falling to Afzul-Khán, the other, made up of Kandahar and Herát, remaining in the possession of Shir-Ali-Khán. Both Amirs now sought the support of the Indian Government. The result of this solicitation was a letter from the Viceroy of India, dated 11th (23rd) June 1866, addressed to Afzul-Khán, recognising both Amirs. In this letter it was stated that it would not be consistent with the honour and renown of the British Government to break off its alliance with Shir-Ali, who had done it no wrong, so long as he maintained his authority and influence over the greater portion of Afghánistán, by administering Kandahar and Herát. The letter, in short, satisfied neither claimant.

In 1867 Shir-Ali was defeated at Khelát-i-Ghilzai. The Viceroy of India then wrote to Afzul-Khán, addressing him this time as Amir of Kábul and Kandahar, saying that each rival must fight with his own resources and not expect aid from the English. Afzul-Khán having died in October 1867, Abdul-Rahmán proclaimed his uncle, Azim-Khán,

Amir, and the people voted him a sword mounted with precious stones. Moreover, the English Government recognised him as Amir.

In the course of these civil wars in Afghánistán, two personages stand out with great prominence, *viz.*, Abdul-Rahmán, Afzul-Khán's son, and Yakúb-Khan, Shir-Ali's son. They both shewed that they possessed the bravery of leaders and the wisdom of rulers. In April 1868 Yakúb-Khán occupied Kandahar and proclaimed his father Amir of the whole of Afghánistán. Fortune now passed to the side of Shir-Ali. In his case, the English did not preserve a strict neutrality, for they sent him rich gifts, as well as arms and money. The troops in Afghán-Turkistán now espoused the cause of Shir-Ali, and in September of the same year he occupied Kábul, and in December inflicted a total defect on Azam-Khán before Ghazni. Abdul-Rahmán fled to Mashad and finally entered Bukháran territory through Marv. From here he made his way to Sámarkand, which had been taken by the Russians in May 1868, and here he sought the protection of the Russian authorities. Abdul-Rahmán remained in Russian-Turkistán till the autumn of 1879.

Shir-Ali now had in his hands all the territory acquired by his renowned father. Accordingly the English not only recognised his authority, but entered into close relations with him. On the 27th March (8th April) the Amir was invited by the Viceroy of India to have an interview with him at Umballa. At this time Lord Mayo held the office of Viceroy. On this occasion Shir-Ali deported himself with great circumspectness, but he openly laughed at the sepoys, saying that they were fit only to feed the kites and to enrich the earth, as they were unsuited to the purposes of war.

Although the Amir was much indebted to his son, Yakúb-Khán, yet he did not like him, and so he resolved to make his favourite son, Abdulla-Ján, the offspring of his favourite wife, heir to the throne. He informed Lord Mayo of this intention and received a refusal regarding the recognition of this choice of a successor. This circumstance greatly exasperated Shir-Ali, and therefore on the main subject about which he had spoken with the Viceroy, *viz.*, the position taken up by the Russians in the neighbourhood of the Amu-Daria, no agreement was arrived at. Consequently the English remained dissatisfied and Shir-Ali returned to his own country completely out of humour.

The father's injustice infuriated the son, and so Yakúb-Khán raised the standard of revolt and in 1870 made himself ruler of Herát. Now Yakúb-Khán was the sworn enemy of the English, and was satisfied that the question of the inheritance had been secretly raised by them at Umballa, where his claims had, he thought, been set aside.

In 1871 the question of the frontier between Persia and Afghánistán in the direction of Seistán arose, and England appeared in the light of

an adjudicator. Accordingly English officers made a survey of the disputed territory and gave their award. By this a portion of Seistán was handed over to Persia, and so Shir-Ali was displeased and aggrieved. After this, Lord Mayo interfered in the relations between father and son and brought about an understanding between them, and henceforward Yakúb-Khán was officially recognised as Governor of Herát.

In 1873 the Russian troops, having gone through a brilliant campaign, conquered the Khivan Khánate. Shir-Ali was disturbed by the near approach of this new formidable power, of which he knew so little, towards his frontiers, and so he turned for counsel to the Viceroy of India. Through a special envoy, he asked what he was to do if the Russians should apply to him to side with them or threaten him with their strength. Shir-Ali's envoy received a reply to the effect that the Amir's best policy was to establish friendly relations with Russia, as the ally of Great Britain. This was the first time that the Afghán Amir had heard of the friendship between England and Russia, and the answer astonished him. Shir-Ali, indeed, understood it only in the sense that he was to open friendly relations with the Russians, and of course he employed every means to this end so that such relations should be thoroughly established. The new position of affairs compelled him, however, to labour so as to put his home affairs in order, and thus be the better able to make of Afghánistán a strong military power.

By degrees he withdrew from the alliance with Great Britain and turned his eyes towards the north.

England had begun to be alarmed at the state of affairs in the Balkán Peninsula, and, in view of a possible war between Russia and Turkey, turned her attention to the strengthening of her Indian frontier. The first step which she took to this end was the occupation of the Bolán Pass.

In 1875 she occupied Khelát, in right of a treaty concluded with the ruler of Biluchistán, and proceeded to improve the road through the Bolán.

The Amir of Afghánistán, who had been regarded by the English themselves as the *suzerain* of Biluchistán, was annoyed at this ignoring of his rights.

Meanwhile Shir-Ali had invited to an interview at Kábul his son Yakúb-Khán, and when he arrived, in obedience to his father's summons, he was thrown into prison. Lord Northbrook, the successor of Lord Mayo, reproached the Amir for his severity, and the Amir answered by absolutely forbidding any Englishman from entering his territory.*

* Further particulars regarding the events which occurred in Afghánistán after 1875, the reader will find in a series of articles by the author of this work, with the title of *Notes on the Anglo-Afghán War* in the following Numbers of the *Russki Invalid*: Nos. 254, 255, 264, 265, 271, 274, 282, 284, and 287 of 1878, and Nos. 13, 18, 23, 31, 41, 45, 65, 68, 78, 85, 90, and 231 of 1879.—*Author.*

Boundaries.

Afghánistán, prior to the campaign of 1878, was comprised between 74° 45′ longitude east of Greenwich and 60° 55′ and between the parallels of 28° 48′ and 37°51′ north latitude. The greatest extent of country, from north to south, in the meridian in which the Sulaimán range lies, is 666 miles; its greatest width, from west to east, in the meridian of Mastuj, is a little more than the same distance. Afghánistán is bounded on the north by the Khánate of Khiva, on the north-west by independent Turkumán country, on the west by Persia, on the south by Biluchistán, and on the east by British India and Káshmir. A portion, too, of the north-eastern border-line of Afghánistán runs contiguous to Chinese-Turkistán and the Russian Pámirs. The northern boundary passes along the left bank of the Amu-Daria up to Khwája-Sálih, whence it turns sharply to the south-west and crosses the Hari-Rud in the parallel of 36° north latitude. From this point, the western boundary of Afghánistán extends to the same river. The frontier dividing Afghánistán from Persian Seistán and Biluchistán was accurately defined in 1872 by the English Committee of Arbitration. The south-west boundary describes a not altogether regular bow, which touches the eastern bend of the river Helmand. To the south, the border-line goes from Rud-Bár, for a distance of 34 miles along the Helmand. Thence, after crossing the Biluchistán steppe, it passes to the east until it reaches the town of Quetta. Here it turns to the south-east and touches the borders of British India in the meridian of 28° 48′ north latitude. Although the frontier-line between Afghánistán and British India is supposed to be established throughout, it is really as undefined as are the greater portion of the frontiers of Afghánistán. It may be said, however, to stretch along the Sulaimán range, almost in the parallel of 70° east longitude up to the point of junction of the Sulaimán and Sufaid-Koh ranges. From here it turns sharply to the east and passes round the Peshawar valley almost in a semi-circle, approaching to within a short distance of the city of Pesháwar. On the north-east the boundary-line touches Káshmir, and on the north side of the Hindu-Kush it runs side by side with Chinese-Turkistán and the Russian Pámirs. This frontier is, however, but little known, and is more or less undefined. From the point on the Pámir plateau up to which Russian topographical surveys have been carried and where there once was a Russian detachment, to the last settled point belonging to Afghánistán on the extreme east, the distance is 53⅓ miles. This intermediate space is uninhabited, but it may be reckoned as a portion of the Russian Governor-Generalship of Turkistán.

Mountains.

Four-fifths of Afghán territory are covered by mountain ranges and their spurs, and these in places form elevated plateaux. These mountains

are for the most part covered with thick virgin forests. Others again are perfectly bare, presenting masses of the most varied formations. The mountain mass of the Hindu-Kush, with its western prolongations that divide Afghán-Turkistán from the other provinces of the country, serves as the watershed of the Amu-Daria and Indus. The Hindu-Kush is thought to be in its turn the western continuation of the Kara-Koram range.* These two ranges may be said to meet in the table-land of the Pámir. The summits of the Hindu-Kush are covered with perpetual snow, and reach a height of 18,000 feet and upwards above the level of the sea, but their altitudes have not been exactly ascertained. The tract between the Kábul-Daria, Káshmir, and the spurs of the Hindu-Kush consists of a mass of mountain ranges and ridges, some of which reach a height of 20,000 feet above sea-level. Nature is here distinguished for her imposing character. Here indeed may be said to be the kingdom of endless valleys, of yawning precipices, and of wild mountain torrents. The Hindu-Kush range comes to an end 46 miles to the south-west of the town of Kábul.

The western prolongation of the Hindu-Kush is the Koh-i-Bába range, and this has a length of 80 miles. Its peaks attain a height of 17,000 feet. Towards the west the Koh-i-Babá divides into three lesser chains. The *northern* of these runs along the right bank of the Murghób and disappears in the sands of the Kara-Kum. The *central* chain, which is known by the name of the Sufaid-Koh or Ghur, the ancient Paropamisus, lies between the rivers Murghób and Hari-Rud and to the north of ths town of Herát. As it turns to the north-west, the Sufaid-Koh falls considerably and finally enters the mountain system of Persian Khurássán. Here it occupies the whole of the northern portion of that province, and in places marks the frontier between Persia and the Turkumán country. The Kopet-Dágh, Kuren-Dágh, and other ranges, which have a considerably less altitude, are but branches of the Sufaid-Koh range. Still further to the west, the Sufaid-Koh merges into the Elburz chain of mountains, and thus serves to connect the Tián-Shán, Himálaya, Hindu-Kush, and other great mountain masses of the continent of Asia with the Caucasian mountain system. The Siyáh-Koh, or *third* range, which runs out of the Hindu-Kush, at first extends in a direction parallel with that taken by the Sufaid-Koh, but it lies more to the south and reaches to the meridian of Herát. Its general altitude is considerably below that of the two first-named branches of the Hindu-Kush, and it throws out many more spurs than they do. From the meridian of Herát it marks the boundary between Afghánistán and Persia and stretches into the valleys of the Sabzára and Anartára rivers. The western continuation of the most southern of the spurs of the Siyáh-Koh enters Khurássán and

* This question is still obscure and awaits solution.—*Author.*

joins on to the mountain system of that province. This southern spur of the Siyáh-Koh, after running to the east, unites with the Aimak mountain chain, which extends in several parallel ranges from the Koh-i-Bába, encircling on the south-west the right bank of the Helmand and extending right up to the sources of the rivers Kásh-Rud and Farra-Rud. The same spur with its ramifications forms the vast mountain plateau called Ghur.

Between this plateau, the Kábul plateau, and the Sulaimán range there are many mountain ranges, such as the Spin-Gur, the Gul-Koh and others. The Spin-Gur or Sufaid-Koh extends from a point not far from the right bank of the Kábul-Daria for a distance of 93 miles. The main chain of this range rises up directly east of the town of Kábul, and has an average height of about 12,000 feet. Its highest peak, Sika-Rám, has an altitude of 15,622 feet, and its double-headed peak, called Spin-Gur, in the meridian of Jalálábád, rises to the height of 14,800 feet. The Khaibar mountains, with the famous pass, form the north-eastern offshoot of the Spin-Gur range. The Shutur-Gardan pass, which lies at a height of 11,500 feet above sea-level, unites the Kuram valley with that of the Logar, an affluent of the Kábul-Daria. A little to the south of the Unai pass, which lies between the Kábul and Bámián mountains, begins the Gul-Koh Range. Throwing out its spurs at the sources of the Argandáb, it flanks both banks of this river, but the Gul-Koh proper is the chain which runs along the left bank of the Argandáb. The chain flanking the right bank of this river throws out spurs towards the west that enter into the Aimak and Siyáh-Koh mountain system. The Gul-Koh divides the Argandáb river from the Tarnak. Near this range there passes a road connecting the towns of Ghazni and Kandahar. Not one of the peaks of the Gul-Koh exceed a height of 8,426 feet. In the neighbourhood of the Shutur-Gardan pass a range joins on to the Spin-Gur, which presses in toward the right bank of the Kuram river. This range crosses other mountains in different directions. After forming numerous mountain plateaux, the crests of this range run generally in a direction opposite to that taken by the Sulaimán range, that is, they trend towards the south-west and cross the road connecting Quetta with Kandahar. Between these towns lie the Khojak (7,500), the Gwai, and other passes which form the link that connects Southern Afghánistán with the low-lands of the Indus.

The Sulaimán range, which is connected with the Spin-Gur, forms the Eastern boundary between Afghánistán and India. Rising up at first in two parallel ranges, the Sulaimán range then divides into a large number of mountain chains, so that, in the place where the river Sura crosses it, there are no less than 12. The western slopes of the Sulaimán range are considerably higher than are the eastern, but the highest altitudes of this range are found to the north-west. Here there

are three peaks, measuring 10,558, 11,990 and 11,503 feet respectively. The last-named of these is the Takht-i-Sulaimán. Up to the month of June they are covered with snow.

Rivers.

The largest river of Central Asia, the Amu-Daria, the ancient Jaihun or Oxus, forms a portion of the northern boundary of Afghánistán. In Northern Afghánistán, or Afghán-Turkistán, there are several streams which belong to the basin of the Amu-Daria, but which do not now find their way to its bed. Thus the river Khulm, which flows out of the spurs of the Koh-i-Bába range, disappears after reaching the town of Khulm; its waters being all used up in the irrigation canals in that neighbourhood. Similarly the Bálkh river, which takes its rise in the same range, after supplying water to the town of Mazár-i-Sharif, disappears. Again the Nari and Andkhui rise in the north-western spurs of the Koh-i-Bába, and after supplying, the first the town of Maimana, the second the town of Andkhui, lose themselves in the steppe. To the west of these rivers flows the river Murghab. This stream rises in the north-western spurs of the Sufaid-Koh or Paropamisus range, its lower waters irrigating the *oasis* of Marv, which is inhabited by Tekke-Turkumáns. It also disappears in the sands, not far from the ruins of the once famous city of Marv. In like manner, the Hari-Rud or Tajand also disappears. This river rises in the Siyáh-Koh range, in the locality wherein this range joins on to the Paropamisus. At first its course lies in a westerly direction, but after passing on the south side of the town of Herát, it soon takes a bend towards the north, thus separating the province of Herát from Persian Khurássán. At Herát, the Hari-Rud has a width of only 6 feet, and a depth of about 1 (*Observations of 1873*).

To the south of the Hindu-Kush there are many rivulets, streams, and rivers, which enter the basin of the Kábul-Daria, the waters of which river enter the Indus.

The course of the Kábul-Daria is from west to east, with a slight inclination to south (between, *i.e.*, the parallels of, 34° 2′ and 34° 36′ north latitude).

This river rises near the village of Sar-i-Chashma close to the Unai pass, and in its upper course it bears south-west. Another branch of it, called the Baránt, bears to the north-west. The sources of the Kábul-Daria lie at a height of 11,500 feet above the sea, the height of its mouth in the Indus being 1,000 feet. The length of the Kábul-Daria from the upper ranges of the Hindu-Kush to its mouth in the Indus is in a straight line 244 miles, the actual length of its course being 320 miles. In every ⅔rds mile this river falls 22 feet, but this fall is not evenly distributed, because its valley consists of terraces the length of which depends on the position of the mountain spurs which descend towards

its bed both from the north and south. The chains of mountains on the south bank of the Kábul river lie closer to its channel than do those on the north bank, and hence the feeders of this river on its southern bank have a shorter course and a less volume than have those on its north bank. The valley of the Kábul river narrows in places, in others it widens out. The widest portions of the valley of this river are marked by the terraces on which stand the cities of Kábul, Jalálábád, and Pesháwar respectively. In places the Kábul river flows between steep summits whose ridges almost touch on either bank; the road along its bed therefore runs through a series of passes, such as the Tezin and others. In its upper course the Kábul-Daria is fordable, but, after receiving through its left bank, a little below the city of Kábul, the Logar stream, which flows down from the Ghazni mountain plateau, the Kábul-Daria becomes a river of great volume. About 40 miles below the town of Kábul the Kábul-Daria receives, through its left bank, the river Barant, which is the principal of its upper feeders on this bank. The Baránt is made up of the Gorband, Panj-Shir, Pachgán, Koh-Dáman, and Tagoi streams; 20 miles lower down, the united Najilya and Koi streams enter the Kábul-Daria. These two streams, after their junction, go by the name of the Alingar; 20 miles below this again the Surkh-Rud, which flows from the Spin-Gur range, and enters the right bank of the Kábul-Daria. Thirty miles below the mouth of the Surkh-Rud the river Káma, the largest of the feeders of the Kábul-Daria, brings down its waters from the summits of the Hindu-Kush and enters its left bank. From this point, and for a distance of 30 miles, the velocity of the Kábul-Daria is perceptibly less, and out of its bed there rise up numerous flat islands. From the villages of Great Dakka, the Kábul-Daria, for a distance of 33 miles, flows with extraordinary velocity between the Khaibar and Momand hills, its bed narrowing in this reach and descending in no less than 32 rapids. As it issues from the mountains, the Kábul-Daria enters the limits of British territory. At this point its channel widens and the river then divides into three branches. Into the southern of these branches the Bára stream, flows entering it near the town of Pesháwar. The source of the Bára is in the country beyond the Khaibar mountains. After running separately for a distance of 22 miles the three branches of the Kábul-Daria re-unite. The Kábul-Daria now receives through its left bank the Landai, a mountain torrent formed by the Panj-Kor and Saváda streams. The Kábul-Daria, after running to the east for about 30 miles, winds round to the south for some 8 miles, until it reaches the neighbourhood of Fort Attock, near which it falls into the Indus. Near Jalálábád the Kábul-Daria is navigable for rafts, but further down, as it approaches Pesháwar, boats can be propelled along its waters. Close to Jalálábád there is a good ford over the Kábul-Daria. The natives give many names to this river; thus they call it the Logar, Baránt, Alingar, Káma, and Landai, after one or

other of the principal feeders. The Kábul-Daria proper is in fact only the upper course of the river which begins at the village of Sar-i-Chashma.

The river Káma or principal affluent of the Kábul-Daria has, in its upper course, the following local names: Káshgár, Chitrál, Chagána-Serai, Nurgil, Kunár and Káma. The sources of this river are close to Talab-Nil, which signifies "the deep lake." They lie in the very heart of the Hindu-Kush, near the Chitrál pass, which unites the Káma and Amu-Daria valleys. The length of the Káma, from its sources to its mouth in the Kábul-Daria, is 380 miles, and consequently it is greater than that of the river which it enters. Its general direction is south-west. To the right and left of the course stretch mountain ranges, from the gorges of which issue numerous rivulets and streams that go to make up a very large river basin. The Káma has a very swift current, but in the winter season it does not contain much water. On the other hand, when the snows melt, this river becomes a copious and roaring torrent.

In many places the bed of the Káma is narrow, and at such points rude bridges have been constructed. Above the village of Asmár the Káma descends in rapids. From the village of Pashat rafts can be freely floated along this river. During the flood-season large quantities of fire-wood and timber are floated down from the sources of the Káma to the Kábul-Daria.

The Helmand is the principal river of Afghánistán, and takes its rise in the southern slopes of the Hindu-Kush. It flows between the Koh-i-Bába and Pagmán mountains, at first in a south-westerly, then almost in a westerly, and finally, after running a certain distance, it takes a general south-westerly, direction as far as 30° 40′ north latitude. From here it inclines to the west, and in the meridian of Herát bears to the north-west. It flows into the Hamum marsh or Seistán lake somewhere about 31° north latitude. The upper course of the Helmand has not yet been explored. Near the town of Girishk, that is, on the road between Kandahar and Herát, the Helmand, from being a mountain torrent, becomes a quietly-flowing river. During the summer-season it has at this point a width of over 1,000 yards and a depth of 3½ feet; consequently it is fordable at this season of the year. During the melting of the snows, or whenever heavy rain falls, the Helmand is subject to heavy inundations. The entire valley of this river covers an approximate distance of 800 miles.

In its central and lower courses it provides water enough to serve an extensive irrigation system. The principal affluent of the Helmand on its right bank is the Keila-Musa, which runs out of the Siyáh-Koh. The principal affluent on its left bank is the Argandáb, which takes its rise in the Ghazni plateau. The Argandáb receives through its left bank the Tarnak and the Argazán; these streams join it not far from Kan-

dahar. The last tributary of the Helmand on its left bank is the Lora river, which waters, in its upper course, the sandy plain of Pishin. Its waters, however, only reach the Helmand in the beginning of summer, for, during the rest of the year, they are sucked up in the sands.

In the south-western parts of Afghánistán flow the Gar-Rud, Kashak-Rud, and the Farra-Rud, all of which are but little known.

All three fall into a small lake situated to the north of the Seistán lake. The Farra-Rud rises in the mountain country of Ghur, the other two in the southern slopes of the Siyáh-Koh. The Farra-Rud for nine months of the year has no current at all, but in the early portion of the summer its bed is 200 yards wide.

The Kuram river rises not far from the Shutur-Gardan Pass. It waters the province of the same name, and, after passing under the town of Banu, enters the Indus. The length of the course of this river is about 230 miles. Between Thal and Banu the Shamál stream, which waters the Khost valley, enters the Kuram river through its left bank.

The river Gomal is formed by the united waters of numerous streams that flow from the Sulaimán mountain system. The Gomal enters the Indus not far from Dera-Ismail-Khán and forms the famous pass of that name on the borders of Afghánistán.

Lakes.

There are very few lakes in Afghánistán. Towards the south-west lies the Hamum marsh or Seistán lake, into which fall the Helmand and other rivers. The general direction of this lake is south-westerly. At its northern end there is a creek, the direction of which bears easterly. The Seistán lake lies between the parallels of 31° 35′ and 29° 13′ north latitude, its average width being about 20 miles. Off the northern angle of the Hamum marsh there are two small lakes. Another lake of Afghánistán and one of her largest is the Ab-Istada, which lies at a height of 6,600 feet, in 32° 30′ north latitude and 68° east longitude. Of the many rivers that fall into this lake, the principal is the Ghazni stream, which enters it from the north.

Climate.

With the exception of certain localities Afghánistán, generally speaking, enjoys a healthy climate, as four-fifths of her surface are covered with mountains. On the summits of the Hindu-Kush, Koh-i-Bába and Spin-Gawi perpetual winter reigns. In the more northern valleys, the climate is temperate, but in the lower-lying localities the heat in summer is very great. In those parts of the valley of the Amu-Daria wherein the course of the river lies through a plain, the summer season is a very sultry time of year and snow in winter is very rarely seen. In the

valley of the Kábul river the heat in summer is great, the highest temperature being registered near the town of Jalálábád, where, during the summer, stifling and malarious winds blow. The greatest number of observations of the climate of Afghánistán have been made in this valley. The climate of the city of Kábul is very agreeable, for in it there are no very great and rapid changes from heat to cold. During the winter, however, the snow-fall of Kábul is heavy. In the course of the winter of 1879-1880 there were weeks of what may be described as very severe weather. In the southern portions of Afghánistán, *i.e.*, in the low-lands of the Helmand, the heat of the summer is very sultry. This heat is intensified by the winds which blow in from the sandy steppes; this peculiar heat is especially perceptible in the neighbourhood of the Hamum marsh. In Central Afghánistán the provinces of Ghazni, Hazára, and Aimak, on account of their elevated position, enjoy a cool summer, but the winters are prolonged and are accompanied by heavy frosts and deep snows.

Vegetable Kingdom.

The vegetable kingdom of Afghánistán is very varied and depends on the relative position of any given locality above the level of the sea. Thus in Afghánistán, within a short distance, say 70 miles, the most varied specimens of plants may be met with, beginning with Alpine growths and descending to the productions of a hot climate, such as sugar-cane and the cotton plant. The high elevation of the greater part of Afghánistán insures the existence of vast plateaux covered with luxuriant grass, a circumstance which greatly favours cattle-rearing.

For the raising of the grain produce of the country, an excellent system of irrigation-canals, diverted from the several rivers, has been organised. The irrigated parts of the country are, therefore, covered with wheat fields, orchards and gardens. Wheat, maize, and barley constitute the chief kinds of grain-produce of Afghánistán. Rice is confined to the lower-lying valleys, where irrigation is carried on on the most extensive scale. The fruits of Afghánistán are famous throughout India. They include figs, apricots, peaches, almonds, nuts, grapes, &c., &c. In places too there are sugarcane, madder, Indian hemp, the castor-oil plant, cotton, mulberry trees, rhubarb, melons, water-melons, vegetables, &c., &c.

Animal Kingdom.

The abundance of pasture-land in Afghánistán makes cattle rearing the chief industry of her people. Indeed the numerous flocks of sheep and herds of horned cattle constitute the chief source of wealth of the Afgháns. The best breeds of horses are met with at Bálkh and Kunduz, and from these provinces the cavalry of the Anglo-Indian army obtains

its remounts.* The horses of the other parts of Afghánistán are undersized and ugly, but they are possessed of great endurance. Camels exist in great numbers, and all the heavy loads are carried by them.

In the Herát province and in Western Afghánistán generally, on account of the want of pasture-land, breeding is principally confined to camels, horses, goats, and the fat-tailed sheep (*Dumbas*). Of the wild animals of Afghánistán tigers, leopards, bears, hyenas, wolves and foxes may be mentioned. In the Sulaimán range wild sheep and goats are to be met with. In the forests along the rivers and on the lakes of the country quantities of game and waterfowl of every description are seen.

Mineral Kingdom.

The mineral wealth of Afghánistán has been scarcely ascertained and is worked only on the smallest scale. Gold is found in the Lughmán valley, in the beds of the Kábul-Daria, Káma, and other rivers. Silver occurs in the valley of the Gorband. Lead, too, is found in the Gorband valley and in the mountains to the north of Kandahar, in the province of Hazára. Copper crops up in the Gul-Koh range, in the province of Hazára. Coal is worked in the mountains and in places in the steppes. Red ochre, for dyeing purposes, is met with at Herát. Antimony occurs in the Gorband valley, in the Khaibar mountains, and also to the north of Kandahar. Iron ore is dug out near Faizábád, in the Gorband and Panj-Kor valleys and in the Sulaimán range. There are, indeed, all over Afghánistán numerous beds of iron ore. It is floated down on baskets containing charcoal, and is highly prized in India. In the Gorband valley and in the Hazára country are found saltpetre, sulphur, and sal-ammoniac. Marble is quarried near Maidán. The famous *lapis-lazuli* mines are situated in Badákhshán, along the high land of the Koksha and close to Jirm, and there are ruby mines at the head waters of the Amu-Daria.

Origin of the Afgháns.

The Afgháns themselves assert that they are descended from the ten lost tribes of Israel. They call themselves Jews,† and although their type of countenance very much resembles the physiognomy of members of that race, up till now nothing has been positively adduced which can place the origin that the Afgháns claim within the limits of credence. The Afgháns assume too the title of "Beni-Israel," or the children of Israel, and maintain that they can prove their origin from King Saul, in spite of the fact that Saul did not belong to the lost tribes. The Afgháns possess historical books in which the genealogy and history of

* This is a curious notion.—W. E. G.

† This statement is only partially correct, *vide* Vol. II of Dr. Yavórski's Account of the stay of the Russian Mission at Kábul in 1878-79.—W. E. G.

the people is traced to Kish, the father of Saul. They declare that the Ark of the Covenant belongs to them, that with it they go forth to battle, and that when it precedes them, with sounds of music, they advance to a previously assured victory. Amongst them is preserved a description of the freeing of the Israelites from the yoke of the Egyptians and from captivity at the hands of the Philistines. In the Afghán language there are, however, some Jewish words, and some of the customs of these people partake of the nature of the Jewish.

Language and Writings.

Of all the languages of the world the Afghán is the most interesting, because it contains Persian, Sanskrit, Arabic, and Semitic roots, as well as words of perfectly unknown origin. The Afghán colloquial language is called Pushtu, but in writing Arab signs are employed with the necessary alterations. Sultan Bábar maintained that, during his reign, 11 languages were spoken in Afghánistán. In the course of time these languages got mixed up and so formed the dialect called Pushtu. Afghán literature is of Persian origin, all the learned books being written in that language, except certain poems which appear in the Pushtu tongue.

Education.

Education (as they understand it) is highly prized by the Afgháns and almost every village and hamlet has its school teacher. In sparsely populated localities the calling of teacher is united to that of Mullah. These teachers are allotted a certain portion of land and receive too a money payment. When a child arrives at the age of 4 years 4 months 4 days they begin to teach it the alphabet; after this the Kurán is gradually expounded, and then the Arabic grammar and Persian caligraphy are taught. In the principal towns there are Government High Schools. The favourite sciences of the Afgháns are theology, jurisprudence, and medicine. Rich people often send their children for scientific instruction to distant countries. But a few Afgháns have received a first class education, and the popular schools only turn out masses of fanatical individuals saturated with the bigotry of the Kurán and distinguished for their general ignorance and intolerance.

Religion.

The prevailing religion of Afghánistán is the Sunni doctrine of the Mussulmán religion, and therefore the Afgháns, like all Sunnis, acknowledge the Sultán of Turkey as their Caliph. The Afgháns scrupulously observe every Mussulmán fast and custom, and yet, amongst the number of the latter, there are many of distinctly Jewish origin. The precepts of the Kurán are not adhered to, however, throughout Afghánistán, for

in the mountain valleys the rite of circumcision is unknown. The Shiáh doctrine has been retained by the descendants of those persons who came to the country with Nádir-Sháh. In Afghánistán there are numerous sects. One of these, the *Sufis*, has acquired such a serious importance that the Sunni priesthood of Afghánistán has become alarmed. The Sufis acknowledge Muhammad as an ordinary political personage, and they deny all difference between the material and the spiritual. The Afghans are tolerant of all non-Mussulmán faiths and do not despise Christians, whom they regard as "people of the book." Superstition is very prevalent throughout Afghánistán. The Afgháns yield implicit obedience to the pretensions of the *Saiyads*, who are considered to be the descendants of the Prophet, and they believe in the supernatural power of Fakirs and Darvishes and in their ability to perform miracles and to foretell the future. The tombs of such personages are held to be sacred spots.

Population.

The information which we possess regarding the extent and composition of the population of Afghánistán is very conjectural, but the number of inhabitants of the country may be put down at between 4,500,000 and 8,000,000 souls. The composition of the races of Afghánistán is approximately as follows:—

Afghán tribes.

Duránis	900,000
Yusufzais and others	800,000
Ghilzais, Ashákzais, Narzais	700,000
Kákars	200,000
Afridis and other Khaibar tribes	150,000
Tribes of the Kuram, Khost and Gomal valleys	300,000
Tribes of the Sulaimán range	200,000
Afghán nomad tribes	150,000
Total	3,400,000

Non-Afghán tribes.

Biluchis	50,000
Tájiks and Persians	700,000
Uzbaks	1,000,000
Hazáras and Aimaks	200,000
Káfirs (*Siyáh-Poshes*)	200,000
Jats	300,000
Hindus, Jews, Armenians, &c., &c.	150,000
Total	2,600,000

Altogether about 6,0(0,000 souls. This mixture of races is scattered over the chief provinces of Afghánistán very nearly as follows :—

Afghán-Turkistán	1,000,000
Káfiristán and neighbouring provinces . . .	970,000
Kábulistán with Kuram and Ghazni . . .	1,900,000
Kandahar Province	900,000
Herát Province and Farrah	750,0 0
Seistán	280,000
Hazára and Karchu	200,000
TOTAL .	6,000,000

The dominant race is the Afghán, and it is divided into 405 branches or *khels*. Of these, 277 call themselves Afgháns and 128 Pukhtuns.

The Duránis, or inhabitants of Southern Afghánistán, have, for more than a century, been considered the ruling race. They have always kept themselves in a constant state of preparedness for war, and every plough that they possessed has furnished the Amir with a soldier for his ranks. Every *khel* is governed by a Sirdár, who is responsible to the Amir. The Duránis are brave and by far the most civilised branch of Afgháns. The Barakzai family, from whence have come all the Amirs from the time of Dost-Muhammad, musters 300,000 souls.

The Yusufzais live on the north-western frontier of India. This family comprises the Khwadazais, Baizais, Osmán-Khels, Momands, Malazais, Midazais, and others. They are a warlike mountain tribe, and can turn out more than 170,000 fighting men. Of the above, the Khwádazais occupy the basin of the Panj-Kor river, or the compact principality of Dir. The Malazais and Mandazais inhabit the independent country known as Buner. Nearly every Momand possesses an English-made fire-arm of some sort, and this branch is considered the finest amongst Pukhtuns. The Shinwáris, or inhabitants of the valley of the Káma, occupy a semi-independent position. The Tarkalanai, or dwellers in the south-western portion of the basin of the Panj-Kor river, form three semi-independent communities.

The Ghilzais occupy the vast stretch of country comprising Eastern Afghánistán, *i.e.*, from the city of Kábul to Khelát-i-Ghilzai. This tribe is the most hostile of all towards the English, and therefore no member of it is permitted to serve in the ranks of the Indian Army. A very extensive system of trade is carried on by certain sections of the Ghilzai tribe, and in the autumn of each year, their caravans cross the Sulaimán range and pitch their camps in the Deraját. The old and weakly persons and the women and children remain in camp, whilst the able-bodied men go about the country and barter Afghán wares for English fire-arms, powder, quinine, and manufactured goods. The Ghilzais, in fact, combine the rôle of merchant with that of warrior. During

the Anglo-Afghán War of 1878—1880 they offered the most determined resistance to the English, and more than once secured a solid victory.

The Afridis, Shinwáris, and other tribes of the Khaibar Pass and mountains constitute the so-called Khaibar tribes. The first-named can turn out 15,000 fighting men. This rapacious and predatory tribe, by taking advantage of the inaccessiblity of their mountain fastnesses, has compelled successive Afghán Amirs to pay a certain toll for the free passage of caravans through the Khaibar Pass. The English authorities, too, during the recent war, granted the Afridis a considerable subsidy for the preservation of order in the same pass.

The valleys of the Rivers Kuram, Gomal, &c., which pierce the Sulaimán range from the Spin-Gawai to the south-eastern frontiers of Afghánistán, are occupied by various warlike races, amongst which may be mentioned the following: Waziris, Turis, Arakzais, &c.

The Biluchis, from their origin, are very closely allied to the southern sections of Afgháns.

Persians are scattered all over Afghánistán and at Kábul. On account of their comparatively higher standard of education, they enter largely into the governing body of the country. Many Persians have in fact reached the position of Minister at Kábul, and a great proportion of the Amir's regular cavalry are Persians.

The Tájiks, a people of Iranian origin, constitute the aborigines of Western Afghánistán and of Badákhshán. Amongst the Tájiks, too, must be reckoned the inhabitants of Chitrál and of certain other parts of Káfiristán. But this last question has been but little examined.

The Uzbaks are of Turkish origin, and constitute the ruling race of Afghán-Turkistán. They belong to the same family as do the Bukhárans and other Uzbak races of Central Asia. The Uzbaks are hostile to Afghán supremacy.

The Hazáras inhabit that portion of Afghánistán which extends from Ghazni and on to the north-west and west as far as the Hari-Rud. The high-lands of the Murghab are likewise peopled by Hazáras. Members, too, of this tribe live close to the Bámián Pass. The Hazáras are a nomad race, and are scarcely subject to the Amirs of Afghánistán, being almost entirely governed by their own elders.

The Káfirs, or *Siyáh-Posh*, occupy the southern slopes of the Hindu-Kush. The origin of this people is obscure, but in all probability they are a Caucasian race. They have, too, certain customs which are peculiar to the Slávs.* Having light-coloured hair and blue eyes, they pride themselves on the title which they bear amongst Muhammadans of "Brothers of the Faringi." What their religion really is has not been exactly ascertained. That they are not Mussulmáns is certain, because the latter call them "Káfirs," or unbelievers. Both sexes indulge in

* No doubt they will in due course be claimed by the Russians as brethren.—W. E. G.

much wine and eat raw meat. Their chief merit lies in the fact that they will kill a Mussulmán.

The race of Jâts is scattered all over Afghánistán, but its origin is not known; probably the Jâts are the aborigines of the country.

The Hindus are grouped together in colonies in the principal towns. In the same towns, too, are found Jews and Armenians. The Arabs form a compact body in the Kunár district, on the left bank of the Kábul river.

Industries and Trade.

Wherever it is possible, by means of artificial irrigation, or where, from the elevated position of the country, a sufficient quantity of atmospheric moisture falls and the soil admits of tillage, cultivation is carried on by the inhabitants of Afghánistán. In Afghán-Turkistán the soil is cultivated by means of canals which are divested from the Amu-Daria and from the streams that flow towards that river.

The Kábul-Daria, Helmand, Argandáb, and Hari-Rud also admit of the carrying out of an extensive system of irrigation, and therefore the valleys of these rivers are distinguished for their fertility and for their high system of cultivation. Corn-growing is especially developed in the Herát province, which is therefore looked upon as the granary of Central Asia. Of the specimens of agricultural produce mention has been made above. We will here, therefore, only add that the cultivation of tobacco is conducted on a large scale, and that large quantities of this drug are consumed by the natives of the country. Cotton is raised in the smallest quantities. Sericulture, too, is weak. Of manufactured goods there are hardly any in the country, though the natives prepare certain woollen webs, cloth, sheep-skins, cotton webs of a coarse kind, silk webs of Bukháran raw silk, scarves, sashes, saddles, knives, &c., &c. The nomads, too, make carpets and felts from wool, and also *yurtas*, or felt tents, for their own occupation. The settled population of Afghánistán is very much addicted to trade, but trade is not developed in the country, because the demand for goods of all kinds is limited. In the bazárs of the several towns rows of shops are to be seen, and in these are displayed all articles that suffice for the wants of those who are not too fastidious, be they town folk or from the country. The greater number of such shops contain fruits of various kinds and edibles of sorts.

There are very few rich merchants in Afghánistán. The barter of produce between the nomads and the settled inhabitants of the country goes on only on fixed market days. Export trade exists with Bukhára, Persia, and India. Goods consigned from India for countries in Central Asia pass through Afghánistán. By the same route there are transported from India to Bukhára quantites of Indian green tea, and this principally finds its way to Russian-Turkistán. The same remark applies to English muslins, which are largely used in Turkistán as head coverings. The

route between Bukhára and Pesháwar, *viâ* Kábul, serves as the market for goods purchased in Bukhára. By this route, too, Russian wares find their way into Afghánistán and in some cases to India. To Kábul a very large quantity of Russian goods are exported, and amongst these may be mentioned mirors, striped cloth, hides, furs, boots, buttons, &c., &c. From Afghánistán there pass to India wool, silk, dried fruits, madder, spices, tobacco, assafœtida, iron, horses, &c., &c. From India are exported to Afghánistán sugar, indigo, cotton-webs, tea, cotton, and various European goods. The trade between Afghánistán and adjacent countries goes on by means of caravans, and the greater portion of the goods are carried on camels; 50,000 of these animals are employed in this way. To Bukhára alone there yearly pass from India 15,000 camels bearing loads; but the caravan trade is greatly hampered by various dues. The especial obstacles, however, in the way of the development of this trade are the bad state of the roads and the poverty of the population on the line of route.

Communications.

Afghánistán occupied an extraordinarily important geographical position in the old world. Through it passed the land routes connecting Europe with India, and forming the chain uniting the reciprocal interests of over 550,000,000 souls. Asia Minor, the Caucasus, and Persia are all united through Afghánistán. The road which passes outside and to the south of Afghánistán, through Southern Biluchistán, on account of its desert character, is of no importance. Afghánistán, too, serves to connect Central Asia and Russian-Turkistán with India.

The route which passes through Herát and Kandahar is the chief road between India, South-western Asia, and Europe. Throughout its extent the passage of wheeled transport and of artillery is possible. It traverses, too, the most thickly populated parts of Afghánistán and of Persia, and has an abundance of water, transport resources, and provisions, also a sufficient supply of green herbage and of fuel. From Astrábád, in the south-east angle of the Caspian Sea, to the River Indus, this route lies through the following points:—

	Miles.
Mashad	355
Herát	230
Sabzawár	84
Farrah	80
Washír	80
Carried over	829

	Miles.
Brought forward	829
Girishk	60
Kandahar	75
Quetta	148
Shikarpur	208
Total	1,320

Were this road put in proper order, Russian goods, after being shipped down the Volga and across the Caspian, could be easily introduced into

Afghánistán and India; by the same route, too, there could be effected a reciprocal exchange of European and Indian goods. In the beginning of the middle ages this exchange was carried out along the route which lay through the town of Itil, the ruins of which are to be seen at this day near the mouths of the Volga. The route in question, in consequence of disorders in Central Asia and the plunderings of Turkumáns, has long been closed to trade. Regarding its re-opening there was much talk during the reign of Peter the Great.

Another important route, connecting Eastern Europe with India, passes along the Kirghiz steppe to Bukhára and on through Northern Afghánistán and across the Hindu-Kush to Kábul and Pesháwar. The length of this route from Orenburg, the terminus of the European net work of railways, to Pesháwar, is 2,044 miles, as follows:—

	Miles.
From Orenburg to the Maili-Básh crossing over the Sir-Daria	672
Bukhára	488
Kárshi	94
Mazár-i-Sharif	216
Carried over	1,470

	Miles.
Brought forward	1,470
Tásh-Kurgán	42
Rui	100
Bámián	106
Kábul	132
Pesháwar	194
TOTAL	2,044

This route, however, cannot compare with the preceding, both on account of its great length, and, above all, its difficult character. Thus, between Orenburg and Bukhára, a stretch of 1,160 miles, it traverses the barren Kirghiz steppe, which is in places difficult to cross, on account of its being both sterile and without inhabitants. To the south of the Amu-Daria, it enters the lower ranges of the Hindu-Kush, and finally crosses this stupendous mountain mass by a pack road, along which it would only be possible to take a transport train with the very greatest difficulty.

Between these two principal routes, there is an intermediate one from Krásnovodsk to Kizil-Arvát, Gok-Tapa, Askhábád, and so on to Herát and India. The length of this, reckoning from Michael's Bay in the Caspian Sea to the Indus, is as follows:—

	Miles.
Bála-Ishem	42
Kizil-Arvát	106
Gok-Tapa	90
Sarakhs	206
Herát	180
Sabzawár	85
Carried over	709

	Miles.
Brought forward	709
Farrah	80
Washír	80
Girishk	60
Kandahar	75
Quetta	148
Shikarpur	208
TOTAL	1,360

With the repression of the plundering instincts of the Tekke-Turkumáns, who occupy a considerable extent of country along it, this route will acquire a vast importance, for, on the one side, the English are extending their line of railway from the Indus to Sibi, in the direction of Kandanar, a distance of 140 miles, and, on the other, the Russians have laid down a rail-road from Michael's Bay to Kizil-Arvát, a distance of 148 miles, with the prospect of extensions towards Sarakhs and Herát.

As soon as the Sibi-Kandahar extension is completed, the above distance will have been reduced by about 480 miles, so that, in the near future, between Europe and India there will only remain about 882 miles of cart-road, between railway termini on either side. When, too, the rivalry between England and Russia in Asia shall have come to an end, this gap will soon be completed, and then it will be possible to travel from London to Calcutta in 11 days.

Through Afghánistán have marched all the great conquerors who have directed their armies against India, from the shores of the Black Sea, from the Mediterranean, from the Caspian and from the Central Asian Khánates. The historical events of the ancient and middle ages which have occurred in Southern Asia, have caused it to become a popular saying that *no one can become master of India who has not first of all possessed himself of Kábul.* Another popular belief has it that *the key of an Asiatic Empire lies in Southern Afghánistán, near Kandahar.* The English themselves consider that Herát is the key to the possession of India. However difficult of access Afghánistán may be, however high may be the Hindu-Kush and the other mountain ranges of the country, conquerors have still been able to attain their object and have succeeded in invading India. As far as is known, the first invader of India was Alexander the Great (*Sikandar Zulkarnain*). After him may be enumerated the following: Máhmud of Ghazni, who seven times devastated India. Between 1000 and 1021 A.D., he took the road between Ghazni and Dera-Ismail-Khán. In 1184 A.D. Muhammad-Guri marched along the same route at the head of 120,000 men and invaded India, possessing himself of the town of Delhi. Timur-Lang (Tamerlane), who marched from Bukhára, crossed the Hindu-Kush by the Anderáb Pass. He then occupied Kábul and marched through the Khaibar, and, having come out into the valley of the Indus, occupied Delhi. Sultan Bábar, Sovereign of Khokand, led 15,000 men across the Hindu-Kush, occupied Kábul, and then, having entered India, took Delhi, where he founded the dynasty of the Great Moguls. Humáyun, Babar's son, who had been driven from Delhi, returned to India in the year 1554, passing over the Hindu-Kush and through the Khaibar Pass. Nádir-Sháh, Emperor of Persia, in 1739, passed through Kábul and the Khaibar Pass, and so entered India, and then burnt the cities of Lahore and Delhi.

The roads which unite the upper and central course of the Amu-Daria with the Kábul River, cross the Hindu-Kush. This range has in fact a very large number of passes, but they are all very difficult, not excepting the Bámián. Along the latter it would be possible in summer-time to move all three arms, but mountain guns alone could move with ease. Over the other passes of the Hindu-Kush it would only be possible to march infantry and in a few places only cavalry, and this only during a few weeks of the year.

The most practicable of all the passes of this range is the one known as the Chitrál Pass.

The chief route connecting the more important towns of Afgháuistán lies between Herát, Kandahar, Khelát-i-Ghilzai, Ghazni, Kábul, and Jalálábád.

As shewn above, the distance between Herát and Kandahar is 380 miles, the subsequent stages being Khelát-i-Ghilzai 88 miles, Ghazni 144 miles, Kábul 84 miles. Thus the distance between Kandahar and Kábul is 316 miles.

From Ghazni there is a road to India leading across the Sulaimán range to the town of Dera-Ismail-Khán. It lies through the Gomal, and its total length is 323 miles.

According to English accounts this is a very difficult route, although the huge armies of Máhmud of Ghazni and of Muhammad-Guri managed to march along it. There are other and still more difficult routes across the Sulaimán range, connecting the interior of Afgháuistán with British India. Thus, along the valley of the Kuram River there is a road connecting Pesháwar and Kábul. From Pesháwar to Thal the distance is 72 miles, thence to the Paiwár-Kotal pass, the height of which is 7,500 feet, 75 miles, from there to the Shutur-Gardan Pass (11,500) 46 miles, and from there to the town of Kábul 60 miles, total 253 miles. This was the route taken in 1879 by General Roberts' force, which occupied Kábul in October of that year.

Besides the chief routes above described, the road connecting the town of Mazár-i-Sharif, the capital of Afghán-Turkistán, with Western Afgháuistán, is of very great strategical importance, for it passes along the northern borders of Afgháuistán and lies close to the camps of the nomad Turkumáns. This was the route followed in 1878 by Colonel Grodekoff of the Russian General Staff.

The following are the stages, with their relative distances: from the town of Mazár-i-Sharif to the town of Sar-i-Pul, 92 miles; Sar-i-Pul to the town of Maimana, 85 miles; from Maimana to the village of Bála-Murghób, 120 miles; from Bála-Murghób to the town of Herát, 115 miles; total from the town of Mazár-i-Sharif to the town of Herát, 410 miles. There are, in places, considerable difficulties along this route; still it admits of the passage of infantry, cavalry, and mountain artillery.

From Herát to Kábul the ordinary route lies through Kandahar. The length of this route is 696 miles. From the accounts which we have of it, the more direct route from Herát to Kábul is of extraordinary difficulty. It has, moreover, never been traversed by Europeans.

Chief Towns.

Kábul, the capital of Afghánistán, has a population of 60,000 souls. The other principal towns are Herát, in Western Afghánistán, with a population of 50,000; Kandahar, in Southern Afghánistán, with a population of 50,000; Mazár-i-Sharif, in Afghán-Turkistán, with a population of 25,000 souls.

Forts.

In Afghánistán every inhabited point is fortified in some degree. The strongest fortified post in the country, Sherpur, close to Kábul, was planned by the late Amir, Shir-Ali-Khán. This fortified post was made use of by the English, who occupied it during the whole of the winter of 1879-80. The natives, however, regard Herát and Kandahar as the strongest forts in Asia. An Anglo-Indian force made use of the defences of Kandahar by sheltering in it for a whole month after the battle of Maiwand. The fortress of Ghazni, too, is held to be very strong. But all the forts of Afghánistán are incapable of withstanding an assault of European troops. On the other hand, the latter could successfully defend themselves from an Asiatic army in any of them. Kábul could be transformed into a fortress of the first class, for all the heights which surround the city are naturally very strong and advantageously situated. Maimana may be considered the strongest fort in Afghán-Turkistán, and it constitutes a barrier against the Turkumáns.

Armed Strength.

The armed strength of Afghánistán consists of regular troops and levies. Shir-Ali, the late Amir, especially busied himself in the formation of bodies of regular troops. In the autumn of 1878, before the war with the English, there were in Afghánistán the following regular troops: 68 battalions of infantry of 600 men each; 16 regiments of cavalry of 500 men. Of guns there were over 300, and they varied very much in calibre, ranging from heavy ordnance to mountain guns. A portion of the infantry was armed with Snider rifles. In 1878 the Afghán regular arms numbered 50,000 men. With the exception of the Uzbaks of Afghán-Turkistán, the whole of the population of the country is fit to bear arms, and, in case of need, to fill the ranks of a *levée en masse*. The levies of the country have not a uniform organisation, and they are divided into horse and foot. The former can muster

80,000 men, and the latter 60,000. In the campaign of 1879-80 the Afghán General of Artillery, the famous Muhammad-Ján of Wardak, contrived to organise a strong levy out of the various Afgháu tribes to defeat, on the open field, a considerable force of Anglo-Indian troops, commanded by the brave and talented General Roberts, and to shut that force up in the Sherpur defences.

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PART II.

MILITARY OPERATIONS.

1.—Summary of the first phase of the Anglo-Afghán War, from the outbreak of hostilities in November 1878 to the conclusion of the Gandamak Treaty of Peace in May 1879.

Towards the close of the year 1878 and during the beginning of the year 1879 I inserted in our Military Paper, the *Russki Invalid*, several articles relating to the Anglo-Afghán War of 1878-79. The narrative was taken up to the 16th (28th) March 1879, when the negotiations were broken off with Yakúb-Khán who, in obedience to his father's last will, gave orders to the frontier mountain tribes to again enter upon hostile operations against the English Army. The Pesháwar column then received orders to advance on Kábul. After marching a short distance, this column was obliged to halt, for its communications with the main body had been interrupted.

Subsequently, events unexpectedly took a better turn for the English, but it is not clearly known under the force of what circumstances Yakúb-Khán's policy was changed, or why he again inclined to a peaceful issue from the struggle. At the end of April the Amir informed the Viceroy of India that he had come to Gandamak, and he at the same time expressed the wish that between the Indo-British Government and Afghánistán friendly relations should be established. The result of the negotiations commenced at Gandamak is known, and a treaty of peace was concluded on the 14th (26th) March 1879. The text of this treaty is inserted in Appendix I to the first part of the present work.*

By the treaty in question the English secured several important and strategical positions. To them were made over the Kuram, Pishin and Sibi districts and the Khaibar and Michni passes. In this way the Anglo-Indian Government obtained possession of very important mountain passes, leading on the one side to the valley of Kandahar, Herát, and Ghazni, and on the other to Kábul. Of special strategical importance was the acquirement of the Kuram district, which terminates at the Shutur-Gardan pass, from the crest of which to the city of Kábul the distance is from 85 to 100 *versts* (56 to 66 miles).

By the same treaty were defined the political and trade relations of Afghánistán with British India, whilst the admission of a British Resident at Kábul, with a suitable escort, was at the same time agreed to. Moreover, it was also arranged that the Indian Government should have

* Russian Text.—W. E. G.

the right *to send its Agents with sufficient escort to the frontiers of Afghánistán every time it considered it necessary to do so, in consequence of any important exterior occurrences.*

The perusal of the full text of the Treaty of Gandamak shows with perfect clearness the wish of the English to firmly implant their power throughout the borders of Afghánistán as far as the right bank of the Amu-Daria and Herát included.

Of the independence of Afghánistán, much less of its *neutralisation*, there could, after the conclusion of the said treaty, of course be no mention.

The English imagined that the object of the war had been attained, and that their flickering prestige in Southern Asia had been restored in all its pristine brilliancy.

With unaccustomed joyfulness and with a certain amount of conceit they notified to the entire world their brilliant triumph over weak Afghánistán, and they loudly proclaimed that henceforth in that country there should be no place at all for any other European power, and that Great Britain alone, the Directress of the destinies of the East from China to Asia-Minor, was to be the real sovereign of all the Afghán possessions. The joy of the English was so great, their self-deception so complete, that the Government of the Viceroy, acting under orders from London, immediately after the notification of the Gandamak Treaty, withdrew its army, despatched its mission to Kábul, and entered at once into thoroughly peaceful relations with the country so recently its enemy.

In order, then, to secure complete repose, the Indian Government clamoured for the most hasty departure of Yakúb-Khán from Kábul to Northern Afghánistán, where the Amir, under the guidance of English officers, was to put down the rising in the province and to push forward several forts along the Amu-Daria.

At the same time this Government, in its serious desire to obtain a complete footing in Afghánistán, and to secure India from invasion, sent to Herát a whole consignment of breech-loading small-arms which were destined to form the armament of the English garrison with which it was intended that city should so soon be held.

After laying down a northern frontier line in conformity with the wishes of the English, Yakúb-Khán was told that he would have to appear in Calcutta in December, where a great Durbar was to be inaugurated to celebrate his coming.

During the whole period of the Amir's absence from Kábul the English said that they would carry on the Government of Afghánistán.

In a word, the Government of Lord Lytton looked upon Afghánistán as on a permanently conquered country, the destinies of which might be easily controlled at will.

But these rose-coloured chimeras were quickly dispelled, and the English had bitterly to regret their mistake.

The murder of the representative of Great Britain at Kábul did away with all the fruits of the Viceroy's exertions and it led also to a fresh war, the consequences of which it would be difficult to foretell.

In this second war the English had to deal with an exasperated, deceived, and insulted foe.

Whilst regretting the destruction of Europeans at Kábul, justice compels us, however, to observe that the Anglo-Indian Government, by its intrigues on the frontiers of Afghánistán, by its bribery of the frontier tribes, by its incitement of the latter against the Amir, their lawful head, by its harsh treatment of persons who were defending their homes and families, by its ignominious (from a Mussulmán point of view) burning of the bodies of men who were either shot or hanged, in the highest degree excited the Afgháns (who are by nature revengeful) and prepared the ground for popular dissatisfaction. In the unfortunate Kábul catastrophe the English must convict themselves. A more humane attitude towards an enemy, even though Asiatic, would not have placed them in the critical position in which they appeared during the Afghán war.

The second phase of the war in Afghánistán is of the highest military and political interest.

The English having crossed the Sulaimán range, and standing at the base of the Hindu-Kush, would doubtless have been compelled to cross the high mountain chain and to descend into the valley of the Amu-Daria. They would then find themselves in the country of the wildest and most freedom-loving races in the world—races with which Alexander the Great could not contend. From a political point of view, the activity of the English on the north side of the Hindu-Kush must produce results upon which at a given moment it would be difficult to enlarge. This being so, it is perfectly necessary to follow step by step all the operations of the English army invading Afghánistán.

But, before we enter upon a sketch of the second phase of the campaign, we would call to the mind of our readers the general features of the first phase of that campaign which ended with the Treaty of Gandamak.

On the 9th (21st) November 1878 the Anglo-Indian Army of Operation of a strength, of nearly 35,000 moved in three columns to the frontier.

The *Pesháwar* column, under the command of Lieutenant-General Sir Sam. Browne (with a reserve of more than 16,000 men) moved through the Khaibar Pass to Dákka and on to Jalálábád, which was occupied on the 8th (20th) December. At Ali-Masjid in the Khaibar Pass the advanced guard of this column had on the 9th (21st) and 10th

(22nd) November an affair which ended in the undisturbed retirement of the weak Afghán forces towards Dákka. Although the Afgháns were cut off from their main body, they succeeded in *carrying off their standards* without the loss of one.

The *Kuram* column (strength about 6,000 men), under the command of Major-General Roberts, advanced to the Kuram valley and on the 18th (30th) November stormed the Paiwár-Kotal, but met with a check. Two days later the storming was renewed and the Pass was taken.

The *Southern Column* under the command of Lieutenant-General Stewart (strength, with reserves, 11,000 men) was a long time concentrating at the Bolán Pass. Not having met with any resistance from the enemy, this column, on the 20th December 1878 (New Year's Day 1879 New Style), crossed the Gwai and Khojak passes, and on the 26th December 1878 (7th January 1879) had a skirmish with the enemy at Takht-i-Pul, and on the day following quietly entered Kandahar.

The Afghán regular army suddenly disappeared, though it had suffered no defeat. Shir-Ali-Khán quitted Kábul, and, after appointing his eldest son, Yakúb-Khán, regent, fled to Mazár-i Sharif. Chaos now set in throughout Afghánistán. Instead of uniting against the enemy on their country's soil, the Afgháns entered into their customary dissensions. This evidently made it possible for the English to put an end to the war by a swift blow at Kábul.

But after the first successes of the English columns, there followed a series of failures which completely upset the calculations of the Staff of the armies of operation.

Recovering from their first failures, the Afgháns now flung themselves on the communications of all three English columns. The English commanders understood that they had not gained possession at all of those strips of country over which their troops had passed, but only of the actual ground on which their forces were encamped.

The attacks of irregular Afghán levies on the communications of their enemy completely upset the transport arrangements of the English army and placed it in a pitiable condition.

Not being able to send out their camels to graze, the English were obliged to feed them on dry food, and this was consequently required in large quantities. A fearful loss set in of pack animals, and this greatly interfered with the victualling of the troops.

General Roberts' unfortunate expedition to the Khost valley, which ended in complete failure, placed the Kuram column in a critical situation.

Meanwhile, General Stewart was directed to move on Herát from Kandahar, it being imagined that it was possible for him to do so. But the condition of the Southern Column immediately after it had occupied Kandahar, was truly awful. To reinforce it, it was decided to despatch from the Indus a force under General Primrose, but in place of the

10,000 camels which this force required, only 1,600 could be got together; all the arrangements in the southern theatre of active operations were stopped, and the problem to be solved was the *saving* of General Stewart's column from *death through starvation*. When Kandahar was occupied, there was no grain stored at Quetta. The four months' supply collected at Sukkur was not available on account of the want of transport, for at this time the Commissariat Department of the Southern Column had lost more than 20,000 camels.

General Stewart divided his column into three parts, sending one *to search for provisions at Girishk* and another to Khelát-i-Ghilzai.

With the Pesháwar column, which had been turned into a number of *étappen* to keep up communication with India, there perished at this time more than 14,000 camels; the troops, too, began to suffer from various diseases, so that it became necessary to send the more disorganised amongst them back to India.

The winter campaign told severely on the English, and their condition deteriorated. Moreover, the mountain tribes had become dangerously excited.

The Southern Column then lost 10,000 more camels,* so it was decided to break up this force altogether. More than 7,000 were accordingly sent back to India, leaving with General Stewart about 4,000 men.

Meanwhile Shir-Ali-Khán died on the 21st February (5th March),† and all authority throughout Afghánistán passed into the hands of Yakúb-Khán. The new Amir wavered, and although he notified to the Viceroy the death of his father, the *friend* of the English, he did not really know on what course of action to decide. In the face of this wavering on the part of the Amir, it appeared to the English to be necessary to show him that their troops could move on Kábul, so a small force was sent to the Lughmán valley, and a wearisome summer expedition appeared in prospect. At length the English were dragged out of their difficulties, for Yakúb-Khán appeared at Gandamak and agreed upon a peace.

Such are the general outlines of the events of the campaign of 1878-79.

Although it did not display on the part of the English any special ability to carry on a war in Asia, this campaign is instructive in a *negative* sense.

The absence of a seriously considered plan of operations, the inability to combine caution with decision, the utter helplessness shewn in securing the lines of communication, the miserable condition of the

* According to official returns the entire loss of camels during the campaign exceeded 60,000, or one-third of the camel supply of the Panjáb.—*Author.*

† This does not agree with Dr. Yavórski's statement. This Russian doctor, who was at his death-bed, says he died on the evening of the 8th (20th) February 1879.—W. E. G.

intelligence and scouting services, the inability to arrange for the regular despatch of transport trains, the want of tact shown in regard to the native population, the burdening of the troops with a mass of unnecessary work in requiring them to defend the Commissariat stores and to make up for the want of transport by manual labour, the subjection of military operations to political considerations,—these, in our opinion, are the chief negative deductions which can be drawn from a minute examination of the Anglo-Afghán Campaign of 1878-79.

It should be observed that the Indian railway system afforded the greatest assistance to the armies of operation. Thus, along the railways of Upper India, in the course of 10 days, 184 special trains brought to Lahore 146,000 men and followers,* 15,197 horses and mules, 6,227 bullocks, 218 camels, 138 guns, and 37,742,400lbs of Commissariat and other stores.

2.—THE KABUL FIELD FORCE. SUMMARY OF MILITARY OPERATIONS FROM THE RE-OPENING OF HOSTILITIES, CONSEQUENT ON THE MASSACRE OF THE MEMBERS OF SIR LOUIS CAVAGNARI'S MISSION, TO THE BRITISH OCCUPATION OF KÁBUL.

The massacre of the members of the English Mission at Kábul demanded a swift punishment. It was necessary, therefore, *to form a new Army of Operation, so as to enter without delay on a fresh war.* The general military arrangements adopted by the Government of Lord Lytton, and which he telegraphed on the 31st August (12th September), consisted in the following.

[Here follow details of the composition of the force under Major-General Sir F. Roberts, K.C.B., ordered to march on Kábul, and also of the Pesháwar column under Major-General Bright.]

And so the Indian Government was compelled to combine the question as to the formation of an active army with the speedy commencement of military operations. The object of these operations had been declared to the troops, *viz.*, the occupation of Kábul and the punishment of its inhabitants for the murder of Major Cavagnari.

The English calculated that by the middle of September General Roberts' column would be in a condition to advance on Kábul. This move was demanded by the entire English Press; it was desired by the Govern-

The Government is urged by the English Press to hasten the despatch of a force to avenge the Kábul massacre.

* These figures I have taken from an article headed "Indian Railways" in the Weekly Edition of the *Times*, No. 145 of 10th (22nd) October 1879. The information is based on a letter addressed by Mr. W. P. Andrew to the Editor of the *Times* and inserted in the previous Number of the same paper. It would be in the highest degree interesting to give extracts from the detailed Report of the Director General of Indian Railways, relating to the working of those railways during the close of 1878. *Four-fifths of the 146,000 men carried were camp-followers.—Author.*

† The *Times* (Weekly Edition), No. 142, dated 7th (19th) September 1879.—*Author.*

ment of Lord Lytton: the troops, too, yearned to advance in order to avenge the death of their comrades, but the carrying out of the idea within the time given was decidedly impossible. Towards the end of October 1879 the war party in England counselled the Government to adopt the most energetic measures in Afghánistán.

The English Press urge on the Government the necessity of rapidly moving on Kábul.

It is necessary to here observe that English public opinion, both in Great Britain and in India, demanded a rapid advance on Kábul— a 'raid,' to employ the expression made use of by the *Standard*. This demand was prompted by the following amongst other considerations: *first*, the knowledge that Asiatics are prone to take delay as a sign of weakness and the recognition of the consequent necessity for the punishment of the Kábulis as quickly as possible; *secondly*, the perception that a rapid movement towards Kábul would prevent the Afgháns organising any serious opposition; *thirdly*, the grounds for the belief that if Kábul were not speedily occupied, the whole of the frontier population of India would rise against the English, and, what would be more important than all, that there would, under such circumstances, begin a serious insurrection throughout the country.

The Kuram column is selected as the nucleus of the force to avenge the Kábul massacre.

As we have stated above, the Viceroy telegraphed that, for the delivery of the main blow at Kábul, the Kuram column had been detailed, and that to co-operate with it a flying column from Pesháwar would be organised. Of serious movements and operations on the part of the Southern Column there was, in the first instance, no mention made at all.

Therefore, the primary plan of the campaign, as sketched out by the Head-Quarter Staff of the Anglo-Indian Army, was comprised in a simple movement towards the capital of Afghánistán. This plan corresponded with the military resources at the disposal of the Government of Lord Lytton.

First step taken by the English on receipt of the news of the Kábul massacre.

On receipt of the first news of the attack on the members of Major Cavagnari's Mission at Kábul, the Viceroy telegraphed to Brigadier-General Massy, who was at Ali-Khel, to at once move his brigade forward, occupy the Shutur-Gardan Pass, and go on to Kábul. It was supposed that the appearance of a brigade before the capital of Afghánistán would quiet the inhabitants and save the members of the Mission. But General Massy, before receiving this order, had already advanced with the 23rd Pioneers. On the road he received authentic information from eye-witnesses regarding the fate which had befallen Major Cavagnari and his companions.

The Pioneers, on reaching the crest of the Shutur-Gardan Pass, immediately pitched camp and entrenched themselves.

Entrenchments in the field.

We may observe that during the first phase of the campaign the Anglo-Indian forces were not accustomed to strengthen their positions by means of entrenchments. It was only towards the close of the war that this useful and often very necessary custom was observed by certain portions of the English troops. During the latter phase of the campaign, we have seen that the first regiment (the 23rd Pioneers) which occupied a position near the enemy entrenched itself. After it had done so the rest of the brigade did the same.

As soon as General Massy moved to the Pass, Pádshah-Khán, the Chief of the Ghilzais, whose country lies to the west of the Shutur-Gardan, sent to him special messengers with a promise that he would give the English every assistance. Thus, their advance towards the capital of Afghánistán had apparently, at its commencement, taken a favourable turn. It only remained to take advantage of this good fortune and by a bold move towards Kábul destroy the plans of the hostile party amongst the Afgháns. But a portion of the troops were quite unfit to make any rapid march. Of transport they had none, of provisions only sufficient for present consumption. Delay ensued, and during that period the neighbouring population began to get disturbed.

General Roberts is selected to command the force told off to march on Kábul.

On the selection of the principal actor in the new campaign the Indian Government did not pause. The choice fell, as all anticipated, on Major-General Sir Frederick Roberts, who, in the preceding campaign, had been the Commander of the Kuram column.

General Soboleff's opinion of General Roberts.

A man was required possessed of strength of will, of a great store of energy and determination. The preceding campaign showed that General Roberts, who was placed in a very difficult position at the head of a small column, had very satisfactorily fulfilled the object entrusted to him. After defeating the regular Afghán troops at the Paiwár-Kotal, General Roberts severely paid out the mountaineers for their constant raids on his line of communications, and by a series of harsh measures to a certain extent quieted the Kuram Valley.

General Roberts leaves Simla and joins the force told off to advance on Kábul.

General Roberts left Simla on the 25th August (6th September) and travelled *viâ* Kohát to the Kuram valley. At Kohát he made several arrangements for the speedy formation of the column, under orders to occupy Kábul, and on the 29th August (10th September) he left for Thal. At Ali-Khel, where the advanced brigade of Anglo-Indian troops was, he arrived on the 31st August (12th September). The troops received him with enthusiasm.

Strength of the English force in the Kuram Valley on the date of the Kábul massacre.

On the date of the massacre of the members of the English Mission at Kábul, the recently annexed Kuram valley contained 4 battalions of British infantry, 6 battalions of Native infantry, 2 Native cavalry regiments, and 26 guns: total 4,000 men. At the rear of the force, *viz.*, at Kohát, there was a small garrison. At Ráwul-Pindi there were the 10th Hussars and the 81st Regiment, the latter having, according to a correspondent of the *Times*, such a number of sick that of their forward movement there could be no mention.

Method of its reinforcement.

And so, in order to reinforce the Kuram column, troops had to be moved from Pesháwar and from other parts of the Panjáb. The following troops were at once ordered to the Kuram valley: the 13th, 20th, and 21st* Native Infantry, the 5th* Panjáb Cavalry, and the 13th Bengal Lancers.

Throughout the entire line from Pesháwar right up to the Shutur-Gardan Pass, a hasty movement of troops was going on, but these troops were scarcely fit for the campaign, and had but the smallest amount of transport.

The first regiments to pass through Kohát were the 13th Bengal Lancers and the 20th Panjáb Infantry. On the 1st (13th) September the 5th Panjáb Cavalry* marched for the Kuram valley.

The flying column, with which the English proposed to take Kábul, was soon made up of the following troops:—

Infantry.

67th Foot.	5th Gurkhas.
72nd Highlanders.	23rd Pioneers.
92nd Highlanders.	28th Native Infantry.
3rd Sikhs.	One Company of Sappers.
5th Panjáb Infantry.	

Cavalry.

One Squadron of the 9th Lancers.	14th Bengal Lancers.
12th Bengal Cavalry.	Two squadrons 5th Panjáb Cavalry.

Artillery.

Three batteries—Horse, Foot, and Mountain.

On arrival at Ali-Khel, General Roberts took over command of the column and began energetic preparations for an advance on Kábul. He

* This is a mistake, for both regiments had been in the Kuram valley from the very beginning of the war.—W. E. G.

telegraphed to Government regarding the immediate despatch of all possible reinforcements, and concerning the utter want of transport. He at the same time fixed the 27th September (9th October) as the nearest date for his advance beyond the Shutur-Gardan Pass.

The formation of the column and the furnishing it with transport were attended with enormous difficulty. Amongst the troops quartered on high ground like Ali-Khel (where were the 72nd and 92nd Highlanders) the state of health was satisfactory, but amongst those below the Paiwár-Kotal Pass, in the Kuram Valley itself, there were many sick.

In the Kuram valley no camels were to be got, and therefore a large number of bullocks had to be collected and turned into pack animals; but here another and very serious difficulty presented itself—these animals required an immense quantity of forage, and this could neither be procured on the spot nor be brought in from other places. During the first formation of the column the inhabitants of the neighbourhood of the Paiwár-Kotal gave the English great and unlooked-for assistance. But before a fortnight had passed the same people began to display a very hostile attitude towards them, whilst small bands of armed mountaineers commenced to appear in different parts of the valley.

As soon as the Shutur-Gardan Pass had been occupied by an advanced guard from the Ali-Khel Brigade, communication between Ali-Khel and the Pass was established by means of the *Heliograph*.

Meanwhile, news arrived that an Afghán army was approaching the Shutur-Gardan; this information induced the English to hold firmly on to the pass. On the 2nd (14th) September this pass was, therefore, occupied by a brigade of infantry, under the command of General Baker; the position of this brigade was at once strengthened by the excavation of a proper system of trenches.

Importance of the Shutur-Gardan Pass.

Thus a very important strategical point, not four marches from Kábul, which threatened also the road from Pesháwar to the capital of Afghánistán, was in the hands of the English. This was a very important strategical success. The pass itself affords an excellent position, the defence of which is easy, whilst to attack it is difficult, and if the Aghán had only succeeded in occupying it with a force of 2,000 men, the English would have required large reinforcements before they could have taken it.

Before he began his march over the Shutur-Gardan, General Roberts concluded with the Ghilzais, living to the west of it, an arrangement by which they were to furnish a considerable quantity of transport for his force. At the same time he entered into an agreement with the local inhabitants for the safe passage of the English across the Shutur-Gardan. Still he could not but expect an attack from the Ghilzais and Mangals, for, as he well knew, a body of Afghán troops, after leaving Kábul, had gone to the east of Ghazni

with the object of inducing the tribes there to make a flank attack on the English troops as they advanced over the pass.

Now let us turn to a short review of that check with which General Roberts had to deal in Afghánistán.

Immediately after the Kábul catastrophe, regular communication between Kábul and the English force went on for several days, and we have seen how the Amir took advantage of this to send several letters containing assurances of his friendship.

Communication between the English and the Amir is interrupted.

But a week had not passed before the Afghán party, which was hostile to the English, interrupted this communication and surrounded "the scientific frontier" with a net-work of small armed bands.

What was then going on at Kábul and what the Amir was doing were not known. The news which was received came in a round-about way, and was of a highly contradictory character.

The situation had become very serious, and such as required the bringing into use of the whole stock of that headstrong energy and desperate daring which General Roberts possesses in abundance, and which, without looking back, would enable him to attain whatever might be the principal object of the campaign. The Russian proverb "Daring takes the city" was never better verified than in the case of General Roberts. Possessed of firm character and, although bald, young in years, General Roberts determined to risk one of the most difficult and daring of military operations; he resolved to sever his line of communications from its base and to establish in a conquered country a temporary base, until the opening of a fresh line of communications with Pesháwar *viâ* the town of Jalálábád and the Khaibar Pass.

Praise accorded to General Roberts' idea of making a rapid move on Kabul.

The 7th (19th) September may be considered to have been the beginning of warlike operations, as during that night the Ghilzais made a sudden attack on the Shutur-Gardan position. The enemy was driven off with loss, but the English also lost several men. "At night may be seen the enemy's signal fires," said a report to the *Daily News*.*

Hostilities re-open.

[The next three pages contain an account of General Roberts' march to Kushi from the Shutur-Gardan, and the state of his line of communications.]

Thus General Roberts' force, without a sufficient supply of provisions, and destitute of the necessary transport, had, immediately after crossing the Shutur-Gardan, been cut off from its base.

General Roberts' force is severed from its base.

The check which General Roberts experienced in his passage of the Shutur-Gardan, to which we have above referred, was very unfortunate for the

General Roberts decides on making a dash at Kábul.

* No. 10429 of 1879.—*Author.*

English. Casting away all caution, General Roberts determined to boldly throw his forces across the Shutur-Gardan and to seek the chance of fortune.

The Shutur-Gardan Pass.

The Shutur-Gardan Pass lies close to the point of junction of the Sulaimán and Sufaid-Koh ranges, and, as we have seen, has an altitude of 11,500 feet above the sea. The northern descent from this pass is of extraordinary difficulty and lies through a very narrow gorge, and when the level of the water in the stream, which courses through it, rises, progress through this gorge is almost impossible. It stands to reason, then, that these difficulties must be increased in the presence of an enemy. General Baker, who had been sent from the Shutur-Gardan on a *reconnaissance* to Kushi, reported that the road was clear of an enemy, and that the Ghilzai chiefs had promised to furnish both transport and provisions.

What did General Roberts find at Kushi, and on what could he reckon in his advance forward?

The English Generals, in spite of assurances to the contrary, count on resistance to the English advance on Kábul.

The Commander of the English column received assurances on all sides that no opposition would be shewn to the English; many were ready to believe this, but the English Generals, to do them justice, thought otherwise. Certain circumstances, of the existence of which the chiefs of the English were aware, indicated that the Afgháns were preparing to offer resistance. The whole question was comprised then in not allowing them to organise a regular defence, and for this reason General Roberts was hastening his advance.

A little later a rumour spread abroad that four battalions had arrived at Kábul which had been hurriedly sent for from Afghán-Turkistán.

Such, then, was the information regarding the regular Afghán troops when General Roberts began his march from Kushi towards Kábul.

From Kushi to Kábul there are two very good roads; one on the right, the other on the left, bank of the Logar stream. The first of these passes by Zargun-Shahr, distant between 20 and 24 miles from Kushi; it then turns towards Kábul, leading past Chár-Asiab. From Zargun-Shahr to Kábul the distance is about 27 miles.

Thus between Kushi and Kábul the English had to traverse a distance of about 50 miles, *i.e.*, about four marches.

On the 15th (27th) September a portion of General Baker's brigade marched for Zargun-Shahr; after it General Roberts rode out. At Zargun-Shahr the chief of the column was met by Wali-Muhammad, a member of Dost-Muhammad's family. Wali-Muhammad declared his devotedness to the English, and of this his hearers had no doubt, because this famous Afghán was one of the aspirants to the Afghán throne, and since all his ambitious hopes were reposed on the Indian Government, he had always been its adherent.

Along the road through the Logar valley there were provisions in abundance, and the Amir's officials assisted the English Commissariat in searching out what was required. This fact is testified to by the English themselves. Indeed, all the fictions which they directed against the Amir were prompted by their own secret motives, and with the object of inculpating him in the progress of events.

After the advanced guard had reached Zargun-Shahr the main body and the transport-train arrived.

Slowness of General Roberts' advance on Kábul.

The movements of General Roberts' force were extraordinarily slow; thus it took five days to cover a distance of 24 miles, or an average of less than 5 miles in the 24 hours. This circumstance is amply explained by the insufficient amount of transport at the disposal of his force. Indeed, hardly a day passed without some complaints regarding the want of transport and the extremely bad organisation of the Commissariat, causing great difficulty and interfering with a rapid advance. When General Roberts had returned to the Kuram valley he had found with the troops 1,500 mules, of which 500 were sick, and 800 oxen. We have seen that in the beginning of September the inhabitants of the Kuram valley furnished the column with a very large number of oxen, and with these General Roberts began his march towards Kábul. There were also with the force a few elephants. Generally speaking, then, with regard to transport resources, the force which had crossed the Shutar-Gardan Pass was in the most pitiable condition. The want of pack animals did not permit of the carriage of a sufficient amount of provisions; but with regard to these the English reckoned on the wealth of the Logar valley.

On the 20th September (2nd October) the English force was concentrated at Zargun-Shahr. Although the march had been slow it had been prosperous; only once had the English been a little troubled; at the rear-guard, composed of the 67th foot, a few harmless shots had been fired.

General Roberts adopted energetic measures to collect transport and provisions along his line of advance.

Pádshah-Khán, one of the Ghilzai chiefs.

Soon after this, Pádshah-Khán, the most influential chief of the Ghilzais, appeared in the English camp. In all probability he there appeared with the consent of his tribe, but he had also his own political objects in view. On the 22nd September (4th October) the force moved to Zaidábád, 13 miles from Zargun-Shahr and 15 from Kábul. Here a halt was made, as the whole of the transport had not come up. Meanwhile small parties were sent forward to Chár-Asiáb, distant 8 miles from Kábul. News reached the English camp

here that all the most important persons and merchants were leaving the city.

Thus General Roberts' troops would have to fight ere they could obtain possession of Kábul.

English cavalry reconnaissance.

The Commander of the force ordered all the camp equipage and transport to be left at Zaidábád under a small guard, whilst the rest of the troops prepared for an engagement. Early in the morning of the 24th September (6th October) the English cavalry scouts sent out to reconnoitre the roads leading towards Kábul came upon superior numbers of the enemy who fired at the English and retired.

This reconnaissance revealed large masses of Afgháns moving from Kábul and its neighbourhood. The Afghán force appeared to consist of eleven battalions and a numerous artillery. The direction of their movements shewed that they intended to attack the English.

[Here follows an account of the battle of Chár-Asiáb, apparently taken from English sources of information.]

[Text resumed.]

The battle began at 11 A.M. and was over by 5 P.M., so that it lasted six hours.

Failure of General Massy's Cavalry Brigade to pursue the Afgháns after the battle of Chár Asiáb.

Major White's detachment bivouacked in the heights commanding the gorges through which the road leads to Kábul. The same night the right flank of General Baker's detachment effected a junction with it, so that the English now occupied the same position that the Afgháns had held in the morning. A portion of General Massy's Cavalry Brigade got during the day to the rear of the Afghán infantry, and yet it managed to do nothing. It could have pursued the retreating enemy, but apparently it had not the heart to do so. General Macpherson's transport succeeded in getting safely back to camp. The whole of the rest of the Kábul Field Force was held in reserve.

The battle of Chár-Asiáb was fought very skilfully by the English. A reconnaissance made early in the morning furnished the Commander of the English force with sufficiently circumstantial information regarding the disposition, strength, and intentions of his enemy. After concentrating his troops, General Roberts formed two flanking columns; the one on the right consisting of 600 men, that on the left of 1,600 men, consequently, he had in reserve 2,800 men, or more than half his force. He placed in the column of attack his best regiments, but these, with the exception of the 72nd Highlanders, were not at a war strength. After attaining his first success, the left, or General Baker's, column, which

made the chief attack, halted; and then, after the strongest position of the Afgháns had been subjected to artillery fire, the attack was made.

Thus an Anglo-Indian force, boldly thrown across one of the highest of mountain passes, after invading a country declaredly hostile to it, obtained a victory.

This victory, however, was really the outcome of the state of affairs. On the one side we see a body of troops, 5,000 strong, beautifully armed, excellently disciplined, and led by a talented General and trained officers; on the other, a mass of only half regular troops, not more than 7,000 in number, without leaders, badly armed, and almost destitute of the knowledge of true military discipline.

The battle of Chár-Asiáb led to very important strategical and political results. It placed in the hands of the English the city of Kábul and the fruitful valley in which it stands. The possession of this and of the valleys adjoining enabled the English Commissariat to complete its scanty stock of provisions.

On the other hand, by this victory the main political object of the movement of the Kuram column had been attained, and it was now possible for it to avenge the massacre of the members of Major Cavagnari's Mission. The executions which the English carried out in the pursuit of this revenge were truly distinguished by their barbarous character. They placed a stain on General Roberts and on his comrades-in-arms, and typified the brutal instincts of the Anglo-Indian troops. They were not even justified by military necessity, as they excited the popular passions of the Afgháns and placed the English force in consequence in a dangerous situation.

Guns and standards taken from the Afgháns at Chár-Asiáb.

The trophies taken by the English consisted of two standards (captured by General Baker's troops), twelve guns,* a considerable amount of war stores, and many Snider rifles.

According to English statements, the Afgháns at first fought excellently, but after they had lost some positions, their spirits fell and they began to retire. The Amir and his suite, who took up a position not far from General Roberts' camp, watched the progress of the fight with the greatest interest.

Kábul open to the English after the Battle of Chár-Asiáb.

The Battle of Chár-Asiáb decided the fate of Kábul and enabled General Roberts to establish a temporary base on the Kábul plain until the opening of communications with Pesháwar *viâ* the town of Jalálábád and the Khaibar Pass.

The Afgháns suffered considerable loss and retreated, but the English did not pursue them.

Thus the Afghans, though beaten, were not dispersed and might

* Another letter says that six more guns were afterwards found.—*Author.*

therefore renew the engagement. Accordingly, on the night of the 24th and 25th September (6th and 7th October), General Roberts ordered out strong pickets in the direction of the enemy and his whole force was kept in thorough readiness.

On the 25th September (7th October) the English executed a slow flank movement towards Kábul in a north-easterly direction. They thus intended to approach the city from the east, where, at a distance of 2 miles from the Bála-Hissár, are the heights of Siáh-Sang, which command it.

We have seen that by the Battle of Chár-Asiáb this object had been attained.

Let us now pass to a description of the events of the 25th and 26th September (7th and 8th October), which preceded the occupation of Kábul.

News reached the English camp that three Kohistán regular battalions, which were too late for the battle of Chár-Asiáb, had occupied the fortified camp of Sherpur, 1⅓rd miles from the city.

Accordingly, on the 26th September (8th October) the Anglo-Indian force changed its front so as to bring the road leading from Kábul to Ghazni on its front instead of on its flank. This circumstance favoured the Afgháns to an extraordinary degree, as it opened to them an excellent and safe retreat on Ghazni and Bámián. But, by this change of front General Roberts effected two important objects: *first*, he gained a position by which he commanded the citadel of Kábul; and *secondly*, he got closer to the Kábul-Pesháwar line of operations, along which the column from Pesháwar was moving. In our opinion, however, this flank movement was a mistake, because no junction with the Pesháwar column could be effected earlier than two or three weeks, whilst during the 25th September (7th October) General Roberts might have finally overthrown the Afghán forces. The English Commander thus gave his beaten enemy time to recover himself, and so the disorganised Afghán regiments quietly retreated towards Ghazni, where they again formed and whence they made a fresh attack against the English. Early in the morning of the 26th September (8th October) General Massy's Cavalry Brigade, consisting of one squadron of the 9th Lancers, two squadrons of the 5th Panjáb Cavalry, and the 14th Bengal Lancers, received an unexpected order to mount and ride to the Bála-Hissár.

Movements of General Roberts towards Kábul unfavourably criticised.

[After giving a description of the occupation of Sherpur, General Soboleff severely criticises the inaction of the Cavalry Brigade under General Massy.]

[Text resumed.]

General Massy's Cavalry Brigade passed the night under the walls of Sherpur. We consider it necessary to state that in this affair the English Cavalry did not show any aptitude for

In action of cavalry under General Massy severely criticised.

good work. It did not make up its mind to advance to the attack, and, when it did it, was too late through its having waited for reinforcements.

At dawn the English expected a stubborn fight; but the Afghán force had taken advantage of the open road to Ghazni, and during the night had very quietly moved off to the south-west, leaving twelve guns.

At last the English got over their surprise and moved their cavalry out of the entrenchments, and then the fugitives were followed up.

The English thought that they could cut the Afghán line of retreat on Bámián and Ghazni, but this idea was not realised. The 12th Bengal Cavalry followed the enemy for about 20 miles and succeeded in securing six abandoned guns, six howitzers, and several elephants, camels, and horses. Only a few of the fugitives were caught, and they were cut up.

On their way back to camp, the English cavalry for the first time passed through the city: here complete order reigned; many of the shops were open, and the dealers were quietly sitting in them.

General Massy again fails to pursue with his cavalry.

General Massy's cavalry, instead of energetically pursuing the retreating Afgháns, rode round the fortified position, starting at the north-east angle and coming out again in front of the east face. In the meanwhile, the Kohistánis had got far away, with the exception of a few stragglers, whom the English cavalry overtook and cut up. Since a portion of the Afgháns retired in the direction of the Siáh-Sang heights, General Massy could have done some execution amongst them. "But," says a telegram to the *Times*, "*unfortunately* the English cavalry were too far off to take advantage of the opportunity."

The English cavalry, in this affair, as in all those which had preceded it, shewed great weakness; it was afraid of the Afgháns, was always behind-hand, and did not know how to pursue; it displayed no aptitude for manœuvreing, and did not carry out, as it should have done, a regular system of scouting.

We would direct the attention of our readers to this characteristic of the English cavalry, because the English believe that their Indian cavalry is the best in the world.

The Afgháns had by this time evacuated all the villages round Kábul and were quietly moving off. The English did not pursue them, but kept up a heavy fire.

The *Daily News* received the following account, dated Allahabad 1st (13th) October, of the retreat of the Afghán troops: "*it is very much to be regretted that the enemy succeeded in getting away*, for now he will hasten to effect a junction with the regiments from Ghazni. Generals Massy and Gough are in pursuit. All the villages about Kábul are hostile to us. Wherever, therefore, we are shot at, no quarter will be

given, and prisoners who are taken in the fight will be shot"—a curious line of conduct for a nation which desires to stand at the head of civilised peoples!

Regarding this affair General Roberts on the 28th September (10th October) sent in to the Indian Government the following report.

[Here a translation of the report is given.]

[Text resumed.]

No quarter to Afgháns with arms in their hands.

In its pursuit of the retreating Afgháns, the English cavalry shewed what their enemy might expect from them. No quarter was given, and all found with arms in their hands were shot; "no quarter" was the *mot d'ordre* issued by General Roberts. English interests required severity, and, according to English notions, such interests are above all other, even those of humanity. Justice, humanity, mercy to an enemy—all these are *piteous* phrases, which sound discordantly in the ears of the English when the question is whether such and such a matter is advantageous or disadvantageous for them.

We have already mentioned that the defeated Afghán battalions quietly went off in the direction of Ghazni. On their way they met three battalions and twelve guns proceeding from Ghazni to the aid of the Kábul garrison. Finding that the Afghán battalions were retreating, these turned back, leaving all their guns behind them. These were the guns which the English cavalry found and took into Kábul. The English had by this time captured about 200 of the enemy's guns. As the Afgháns were not pursued time was given them to recover themselves.

We have already observed that General Roberts made a great mistake in changing the front of his attack on Kábul: the Afgháns took advantage of this error and changed the front of their onsets; they threw themselves to the south of Kábul, attacked the English line of communications, and compelled their enemy to abandon the Shutur-Gardan Pass.

The regular regiments from Afghán-Turkistán.

On the day preceding this occurrence, *i.e.*, on the 3rd (15th) October, Major-General Hills, the Military Governor of Kábul, reported that he had received intelligence of the approach towards Kábul of a regular Afghán detachment consisting of six battalions and three cavalry regiments, and that it was moving along the Bámián road from Afghán-Turkistán.

It then became clear to General Roberts why Yakúb-Khán had so urged him at Kushi not to advance on Kábul; the Amir was said to be expecting the concentration of an entire army at his capital, and with this he hoped to repel the English invasion. And certainly we have

seen that at Chár-Asiáb the Afgháns had eleven battalions, that they awaited three more from Ghazni, three from Kohistán, and six battalions and three cavalry corps from Afghán-Turkistán. If, then, General Robert had delayed his passage of the Shutur-Gardan and his advance on Kábul he would have encountered a mobilised army of Afgháns, of a strength of 20,000 men and 200 guns. His decisive advance did not allow the Afgháns to unite their forces before Kábul, but his faulty flank movement after the battle of Chár-Asiáb made it possible for them to save themselves from entire defeat. With twelve battalions and several cavalry regiments still untouched, the Afghán leaders kept their heads and planned a fresh campaign against the English. Added to this, they became inspirited by the success of their co-religionists at the Shutur-Gardan, and at seeing that General Roberts' force was numerically weak and suffering from a want of everything.

Thus General Roberts' force was not in a brilliant condition when it reached Kábul. A small store of provisions, almost without transport, cholera in its midst—all these were circumstances which placed this force in a very difficult position, especially if we bear in mind that the Shutur-Gardan Pass was closed for transport purposes, and that the alternate line of communications, by the valley of the Kábul river, was not yet open. The victory at Chár-Asiáb got the English out of a scrape and enabled General Roberts to enter upon a bold strategical plan of operations.

On the 14th (26th) October, General Roberts, with a small flying column, moved from Kábul on Chár-Asiáb, in order to receive the troops *en route* to join his force from the Shutur-Gardan, as they advanced through the Logar Valley. On his way he visited several villages, in which he collected the taxes that had not already been paid to the Amir. Hence it is not surprising that troops which had left the Shutur-Gardan in light marching order, entered Kábul with a transport-train and provisions of different kinds. These troops arrived at Kábul by *échelons*, the first on the 19th (31st) October, the last on the 25th October (6th November).

3.—The Kuram Column and the force left in the Kuram Valley after the British advance on Kábul.

The Kohát cantonment served as the base of the Kuram column. This station lies 36⅔ miles directly to the south of Pesháwar; but as Kohát is only a small station, the real base of both columns was the city of Pesháwar. The line of operations of the Kuram column lay through Thal, the village of Hazár-Pir, Fort Muhammad-Azim (Kuram), the Paiwár-Kotal Pass, the village of Ali-Khel, the Shutur-Gardan

Pass, and on to Kábul. Total distance about 254 miles. The intermediate stages are as follows :—

	Miles.
Kohát cantonment to Thal	72
Village of Hazár-Pir	25⅓
Muhammad-Azim (Kuram)	26⅔
Village of Zabr-Dast Kala to the west of the Paiwár-Kotal Pass	23⅓
Village of Ali-Khel	13⅓
Shutur-Gardan Pass	33⅓
City of Kábul	60
TOTAL	254

The height of the Paiwár-Kotal Pass above sea-level is about 7,500 feet, that of the Shutur-Gardan Pass about 11,500.*

Comparison between the Kuram and Khaibar routes to Kábul.

This route is in all respects more difficult than that along the Kábul river. It is longer, too, than the one from Pesháwar by nearly 100 miles. But the head-quarter staff of the Indian Army preferred it to the other, *1st*, because they considered that the Kuram valley had been conquered by the English ; and *2ndly*, but principally, because they imagined that the people along it and onwards by the Shutur-Gardan Pass towards Kábul were not so hostile to the English as those along the Pesháwar-Kábul route. Hereafter we shall see that this calculation was erroneous,

Abandonment of the Kuram valley route to Kábul.

and that the English were obliged to entirely give up this line of operations, though they had not yet effected an opening along the northern route.

Base of operations of the Kandahar column.

Of the base and line of operations of the Southern Column we shall speak separately, for this question is of great importance, not only in a military but in a political sense.

From a telegram sent from Thal to the *Times*, dated 14th (26th) December 1879, it is evident that the Kuram Field Force, in the middle of December, consisted of 3,000 men, and yet we are told that the troops sent against Zau numbered 3,100 men. Either, then, the figures first quoted are below what they should be, or the latter are exaggerated. In a Reuter's telegram sent from Calcutta on the 8th (20th) December, it is stated that in the Kuram valley there were 9,000 men and 20 guns. This communication, by exaggerating the strength of the several English detachments, had in view the quieting of English public opinion, which was possessed of misgivings regarding General Roberts' position before Kábul. We are inclined to think, therefore, that the whole of the Anglo-Indian force in the Kuram valley during the autumn

* See Professor V. V. Grigorieff's compilation entitled *Kábulistán and Káfiristán.—Author.*

of 1879 was of a strength between 3,500 and 4,000 men, inclusive of the garrison of Thal. This force was supplied with a sufficient quantity of provisions, for in the Government note enumerating the state of the Commissariat Department of the Army of Operations on the 12th (24th) February 1880, it was asserted that the Kuram force had supplies enough to last three months.

The sanitary state of the Kuram force was not brilliant, since from a Calcutta telegram of the 24th February (7th March) we know that the 85th Foot, stationed at Thal, and the 8th Foot on the Paiwár-Kotal, suffered during the winter, whilst the sickness in the 13th Native Infantry was very considerable.

In the Kuram valley apparently all was quiet; but on the 10th (22nd) February, the English were alarmed by the savage murder, in the middle of their camp, of Lieutenant Lumsden, of the 13th Bengal Lancers. He was killed during the night by an Afghán, who dealt him several deadly blows and then got away. Neither the pickets nor the camp-guard noticed the approach of this prowler.

The attack on Chapri is another instance of the inability of the English pickets and camp-guards to look after the safety of the post.*

The hope alone of re-opening communication by way of the Shutur-Gardan, in the event of the state of the Khaibar line of communication requiring it, should have induced the English to maintain a very considerable force in the Kuram valley, in spite of the recognised weakness of the Anglo-Indian Army. But the desire to retain this valley in any case led to the scattering of the forces of the Army of Operation.

The obstinate efforts of the English to *conquer* the inhabitants of the Kuram valley and to thoroughly subject them to their rule, must be acknowledged to have been a great mistake. It would have been wiser to have abandoned the Kuram valley altogether, immediately after direct communication had been opened between Pesháwar and Kábul, and to have concentrated all the released troops at Kohát, leaving a small detachment of observation at Thal, the mouth of the valley. By having an available reserve at Kohát, the English could, according to circumstances, have moved troops either *viâ* the Khaibar, towards Jalálábád, or else have marched them on Kandahar. Finally, the same troops could have again occupied the Kuram valley if necessity had rendered such a step desirable. For all three of these alternatives, the English generals would have had in their hands a very strong column of operations. But the staff of the Indian Army arranged otherwise and so sacrificed this force to useless fighting with the semi-barbarous inhabitants of the valley.

From the middle of October 1879, the occupation of the Kuram

* Lieutenant Cazalet, of the 1st Bengal Cavalry, commanding the Chapri post on this occasion, was placed under arrest.—*Author.*

valley and the military operations in it form a perfectly separate episode in the Anglo-Afghán War, for they exercised no sort of influence on what was taking place before Kábul or on the Pesháwar line of communications. The Kuram force was cut off from Kábul by the lofty Shutur-Gardan Pass, which is impassable in winter, and from the valley of the Kábul river by the Spin-Gur snowy range. Even during the march of the Kandahar column, under Lieutenant-General Stewart, to Kábul *viâ* Ghazni, the Kuram force was of no use to the English.

It may, indeed, be said that throughout the campaign of 1879-80, or, at least from the time when the Afgháns compelled the English to withdraw from the Shutur-Gardan, that the Kuram force was of no use at all. The presence of a large force indeed in the Kuram valley weakened the effective roll of the Anglo-Indian army and led to a needless scattering of troops along the frontiers of Afghánistán. We are, however, prepared to admit one useful side to the question of the occupation of this valley—it covered a large portion of the Indus valley and prevented the mountain tribes from making raids into British territory.

With the advent of spring, the English commanders entertained the thought of the possibility of again occupying the Shutur-Gardan Pass and of entering into direct relations with the Kábul Field Force, and in any case of establishing an auxiliary line of communications. The object in view was not, however, attained.

4.—Fighting on the Shutur-Gardan after General Roberts's advance on Kábul.

Now let us turn to a review of the state of affairs on the Shutur-Gardan.

[Here follows an account of the defence of the Shutur-Gardan under Lieutenant-Colonel Money, the several days' operations which were quite distinct being all mixed up together.]*

[Text resumed.]

General Hugh Gough reached the Shutur-Gardan on the 8th (20th) October. At this time a column of 400 men, principally Native infantry, was marching from Ali-Khel to the Shutur-Gardan to complete the different details of General Roberts' force at Kábul. Although the English detachment at the Shutur-Gardan had repulsed the Afghán attack, its position had not been improved; indeed, the Afgháns still threatened it. Thus a report sent to the *Daily News* dated 15th (27th) October says that though the Afgháns on the Shutur-Gardan had again been defeated, "they were not dispersed."

General Roberts was therefore obliged to abandon the pass, however dangerous it might be to him to do so.

* The same confusion is, however, noticeable in some of the English published accounts.—W. E. G.

Meanwhile, on the 17th (29th) October, two squadrons of the 9th Lancers crossed the Shutur-Gardan. This circumstance gave the English the greatest satisfaction, because they regarded it as a proof of the safety of this pass. But this was a poor consolation, since the Afgháns were never quiet, but constantly harassed the English—who were already preparing to abandon the pass—and collected their forces together for fresh engagements.

That very day the Shutur-Gardan was finally given up. Its subsequent complete evacuation was caused by the fact that the columns could only make their way with difficulty from the Kuram valley to the crest of the pass.

A portion of the detachment which had held the Shutur-Gardan returned to the Kuram valley and a portion went on to Kábul. Thus General Roberts' force received a further reinforcement.

In the investment of the Shutur-Gardan the *tactical* advantage lay with the Anglo-Indian troops, who very clearly shewed the Afgháns the superiority of their organisation and of their armament, but the *strategical* success was indisputably on the side of the latter. The English were in fact obliged to abandon the sole line of communication with Pesháwar by which General Roberts's column could alone receive reinforcements and war stores. This was really the first great failure experienced by General Roberts's troops. The Afgháns too clearly shewed that the battle of Chár-Asiáb and the occupation of their capital had not broken their spirit of resistance to their enemy. It is worthy of surprise to note that the Afgháns proved themselves better strategists than did the English commanders.

Impressed as they were with the recent occupation of Kábul, the English did not pay due attention to their failure on the Shutur-Gardan. It is, indeed, the custom of the English not to concern themselves with that which they do not wish to notice. On this occasion both General Roberts and the Viceroy supposed that the regular Afghán troops had been *finally* dispersed.

[Here follows the text of the Queen-Empress' message of thanks and an account of the explosion at the Bála-Hissár.]

The Kuram base is given up.

There being no possibility of maintaining a base in the Kuram valley, *firstly*, because the pass leading to that valley was in the hands of his enemy, and *secondly*, because the population of the same valley was now in open hostility to the English, and as he had only a *temporary* base on the Kábul plain, General Roberts determined to get out of this dangerous position by an energetic effort to effect a junction with the Pesháwar column which was advancing with extraordinary slowness along the valley of the Kábul river.

5.—Position of the English at Kábul in December 1879.

In the beginning of December the position of the English in the northern theatre of the military operations in Afghánistán was almost critical. They in reality only held the city of Kábul and its neighbourhood, in which there chanced to be quartered the detachments of Generals Macpherson and Baker. Although the line of communication with Pesháwar was still in their hands, their authority over it was confined to such portions only as were actually held by their troops.

Relative strength of the forces in Afghánistán after hostilities had been resumed consequent on the Kábul massacre.

In order to quiet the mind of the public, the Indian Government published a statement regarding the military position of affairs in Afghánistán. In this document it is stated that General Roberts had, in the beginning of December 1879, a force of 7,500 men and 23* guns, with sufficient transport and also *matériel* and provisions to last five months; that the health of the troops was excellent; that the force occupied a strongly fortified position in Sherpur, and that for its defence there were, besides the 23 guns already mentioned, 214 guns of various calibres which had been taken from the Afgháns. It was further stated that for the immediate defence of the position 2,500 men were sufficient, leaving 5,000 available for offensive movements. The same document announced that the strength of the troops under General Bright's orders between Jamrud and Jagdalak amounted to 12,000 men and 30 guns, and further that these troops were furnished with complete complement of transport and two months' supply of provisions. The public were then told that General Stewart had, in the neighbourhood of Kandahar, 9,000 men fit for fighting and 62 guns. Again, that General Watson had in the Kuram valley 9,000 men and 20 guns. The total available strength of the Anglo-Indian Army of Operations, including reserves at Pesháwar, was put down at 45,000 men and 160 guns. "These figures," said the compilers of the document in question, "are fully sufficient for the requirements of the present moment." But the correctness of the said figures we have ample reason for doubting. Indeed, more trustworthy sources show us that General Roberts' force, in the beginning of December 1879, was made up of not 7,500 men fit for fighting as stated, but of not more than 5,000 effective men—figures which are indicated by the *Standard*, which had excellent correspondents in the ranks of the force. In like manner, we doubt the correctness of the force stated to be under the orders of General Stewart at Kandahar, and likewise the information given as to the quantity of provisions with the several forces. There are grounds for the belief that

* The *Times* thus enumerates the strength of General Roberts's force in Sherpur: Europeans 2,766, Natives 5,457: total 8,223, and 23 guns, including 700 cavalry.—*Author.*

in the beginning of December, General Roberts had not five but only three months' provisions, and that the troops scattered between Jamrud and Jagdalak were altogether without transport, and, moreover, were very badly off for provisions.

6.—Strengthening of the English position around Kábul.

Criticism.

The position occupied by General Roberts' troops was extended enough to require the employment of a force of not less than 30,000 men.

General Roberts's force, which was scattered over an extended position around the city of Kábul, occupied, with respect to Afghánistán generally, a strictly defensive attitude. It dominated only over the city of Kábul and over those places at which there were detached posts. Even those villages that were nearest the city of Kábul and which were not occupied by Anglo-Indian troops did not acknowledge English rule, but were still under the guidance of their own appointed leaders.

About the same time General Roberts forwarded the following telegram to the Indian Government: "The 1st (13th) December was the date fixed for a combined attack on us, and large bodies of the assembled tribes entered into communication with the inhabitants of the city. The enemy's losses have been very great, but hostile bands are still in the neighbourhood."

We altogether fail to understand what General Roberts wished to express in this message, for we have already seen that in the neighbourhood of Kábul there were not mere bands but several strong bodies of Afgháns, and that, though these Afgháns had doubtless suffered losses, they had twice defeated the English and had compelled them to evacuate the suburbs of the city, with the exception of certain small posts, and further, that they had not only done the reverse of retreating, but were rather with energy and determination gradually laying siege to Kábul.

[General Soboleff, after reviewing the various encounters between the English and the Afgháns before Kábul, then enters upon the following criticism of General Massy's loss of the guns.]

[Text resumed.]

General Massy's loss of the guns at Kábul.

General Massy, whilst advancing with too much self-confidence over a country intersected by irrigation canals and dotted over with fortified villages and consequently unsuited for the movements of cavalry, unexpectedly came upon a considerable body of the Ghazni levy, under the command of Muhammad-Ján. The English telegrams tell us that the Afgháns numbered 10,000, but we take these figures to be exaggerated.

Instead of at once carrying out a *reconnaissance* in force and deciding on some definite line of action, General Massy placed his guns in posi-

tion and at once opened fire on the Afgháns, whereupon the Ghazniites advanced to the attack. Surprised by the boldness of the enemy's attack and wishing to protect his guns, General Massy moved forward a portion of the English cavalry, and proceeded to charge the advancing enemy. The Ghazniites drove the English horsemen back and a second charge met with the same result.

Meanwhile, a body of the Ghazniites had boldly thrown themselves on the guns and in a hand-to-hand fight had obtained possession of them. General Massy's broken detachment then hastily withdrew under cover of a squadron of the 14th Bengal Lancers. The retreat was carried out in such disorder as to apparently throw into confusion the remaining troops in rear; at least, the *Times* correspondent says that a portion of the retreating troops were rallied, in the direction of Deh-Mazang, by General Roberts in person, who had ordered out of camp a second party under Captain Deane and a third under Colonel Macgregor, General Roberts's Chief of the Staff. The Ghazniites, having thrown the guns which they had taken from the English into a nullah, moved towards Kábul by the Deh-Mazang gorge. Taking advantage of this movement on the party of the Afgháns, Colonel Macgregor, with a body of infantry, made his way unopposed to the spot where General Massy had been defeated and got back the lost guns.

Fortunately for the English, the Deh-Mazang gorge, which is distant 2 miles from Kábul, had been occupied by two companies of the 72nd Highlanders, reinforced by some cavalry details.

Meanwhile, General Macpherson, having heard General Massy's cannonade, changed the direction of his own advance and struck at the rear of the Ghazniites, but without success, for by that time the successful enemy had moved in the direction of Bábar's tomb and had occupied the heights which command Kábul. General Macpherson's detachment then bivouacked in the Deh-Mazang gorge.

Thus the English were beaten by the Afgháns, but the *Daily News* correspondent says on the subject: "The enemy, directed by excellent leaders, had in his ranks from 2,000 to 3,000 men armed with Sniders. Our Artillery fire and the attacks of our cavalry inflicted heavy loss on the enemy, but he steadily withstood both the one and the other."

We have seen that the Afgháns took the English guns and *drove back* their cavalry, and we, therefore, hold that it was the *English* who sustained the heavy loss, and that it was *they* who were defeated.

In the Sherpur fortified camp there were scarcely any troops left, and, therefore, General Roberts in person directed several details to return to the camp through the city of Kábul. Here there reigned apparent quiet, but this was merely the calm before the storm.

On the heights which commanded the Bála-Hissár was posted a portion of the 72nd Highlanders. In the course of the night the Afgháns

several times tried to gain possession of this commanding point, but they did not succeed in doing so.

On the 30th November (12th December) General Roberts ordered General Macpherson to drive the Afgháns from the position which they had taken up. The key of this position was the steep conical hill, called the Takht-i-Sháh, distant 2 miles to the south of Kábul. The Afghán position was an extended one, but it contained within itself a considerable number of local obstacles. The storming column was under the command of Colonel Money, the officer who had defended the Shutur-Gardan Pass, and it consisted of 200 men of the 67th foot, 150 of the 3rd Sikhs, a detachment of the 5th Gurkhas, and two mountain guns. The Afgháns made a stubborn resistance, and all the efforts of the English to take the position were futile. Night ended the engagement.

Thus, during two consecutive days, success had lain with the Afgháns. Still General Roberts did not lose hope of ultimately succeeding, but just at this time he was concerned about the position of General Baker's detachment. We have seen that Baker had been sent towards the rear of the Ghazni levy, in order to cut off its retreat to Ghazni. But it would seem that the Ghazniites did not entertain the question as to retiring, but rather of conducting a bold attack. The result was that General Baker found his own line of retirement on Kábul had been closed.

Unfortunately the English accounts give us but little information regarding General Baker's column during these two days. The *Daily News* correspondent, telegraphing from Kábul on the 30th November (12th December), merely says that "General Baker is leaving Maidán and is returning here" (Sherpur). We again find him on the night of the date just mentioned on the flank of the position occupied by the Afgháns on the Takht-i-Sháh. We should observe that General Baker's position was considerably ameliorated by the fact that while he was cut off from General Macpherson's brigade, he could communicate with him by *heliograph*, and could thus learn what was the general position of affairs.

The task then before General Baker's column was to get back to Kábul. Accordingly, on the 1st (13th) December, the English undertook an attack from two sides on the position held by the Afgháns. From General Baker's column the following storming party was told off: 500 men of the 92nd Highlanders, 200 men of the 5th Panjáb Infantry, the 5th Panjáb Cavalry, and 4 mountain guns. The party was directed to scale the heights and to make its way to Kábul, and it was so to carry out this movement as to allow the rest of the troops to retire without opposition. The infantry portion of the party accordingly commenced its ascent of the heights, which the English say were held by masses of the enemy. Along the line of advance, there were many obstacles that impeded the free movement of the attacking party. An advanced body under the command of Major White, consisting of two selected companies

of the 92nd Highlanders, energetically scaled the heights, only stopping to take breath. On the other side, a portion of General Macpherson's column was also moved forward to the attack. The Afgháns, seeing that they were being threatened on two sides, began to waver and to gradually withdraw from one position after the other. Major White's companies now arrived at the highest point of the position which the Afgháns had occupied and which had already been reached by Colonel Money.

Meanwhile, considerable masses of Afgháns, probably composed of inhabitants of the Logar Valley, having collected in the neighbourhood of the rear-guard which General Baker had left below pending the result of the movements of the storming party, attacked General Baker's main body, but not attaining any decisive results they extended themselves in the direction of the Siáh-Sang heights, where 2,000 Kohistánis awaited them. General Baker then advanced, and after he had effected a junction with General Macpherson's detachment, directed the main portion of his own column to ascend the heights.

By that time a body of cavalry had been sent out to reconnoitre from Sherpur, and, as the *Times* correspondent says, had had an opportunity of distinguishing itself, for a detail of the Guide Cavalry, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Stewart, had made two successful attacks.

Although the occupation of the Takht-i-Sháh heights proved to be a successful affair for the English, its success was only partial, and in no way lessened the importance of the general success of the Afgháns who were gradually closing in on Kábul.

[A table is here given showing the English losses between the 28th November (10th December) and the 1st (13th) December.]

[Text resumed.]

The population of Kábul still remained quiet, although a portion of it had taken part in the struggle. The *Daily News* correspondent, writing from that city under date the 1st (13th December), says—"The enemy fought desperately, and many of the inhabitants of the city joined his ranks; the villagers, too, cut up any soldier who got separated from his comrades, even though he happened to be under the very entrenchments of our camp." The *Times* correspondent also stated that the Afghán opposition, which had been intensified by the English failures of the 29th November (11th December), met with a strong check in the English success of the 1st (13th) December, and that the resistance would probably altogether cease, because the Afghán troops, who had incited the people to rise against the English, would themselves be attacked. He added that the fortified position of Sherpur would in any case be put in a thorough state of defence.

Early in the morning of the 2nd (14th) December, when the English

imagined that they would obtain some rest after their weary marching, masses of Afgháns began to slowly descend from the Koh-i-Asmai heights and to move in a direction parallel to the west face of the Sherpur fortified camp and at a distance of about 1 mile from it. The English commanders supposed that they were Afgháns who were somewhat late in retiring after the defeat inflicted on them the day before, and that they were now hastening to clear out of the heights and to go away. Instead of watching their movements and carrying out a *reconnaissance* so as to ascertain what these Afgháns intended to do, General Roberts decided on attacking them at once.

[Here is given an account, presumably taken from English sources, of the fighting on the Koh-i-Asmai heights on the 2nd (14th) December.]

The above account thus ends—

General Roberts sought safety in a hurried retirement into the Sherpur camp.

General Roberts' withdrawal to Sherpur and the moral effect of that movement.

On this occasion he acknowledged himself beaten, and sent an order to General Macpherson to evacuate the heights which he had occupied and also to take shelter in the Sherpur fortified camp.

[After quoting a communication from the *Times* correspondent, dated Sherpur 3rd (15th) December, regarding the position of affairs immediately after the fighting on the Koh-i-Asmai heights, General Soboleff gives a return of the British casualties up to the date above mentioned.]

[Text resumed.]

Losses of the English in the fighting before Kábul in December 1879.

Thus in the four days' fighting before Kábul, the Anglo-Indian force lost in killed 83, wounded 192 : total 275, also three guns. An official despatch, dated Kábul 5th (17th) December, runs as follows :—" General Roberts with 7,000 men is in the Sherpur camp, where he occupies a strongly fortified position, stored with five months' provisions. *The original position was too extended, and it could not be held without danger.*"

More recent communications to the English newspapers tell us that General Roberts' withdrawal to Sherpur resembled a flight. Throwing themselves in masses on the retreating English, the Afghán levies engaged in hand-to-hand fighting, and in this the inhabitants of Kábul took part. All who were in the rear of the English column were cut up, so that the total loss of the English force, including camp-followers, during these four days at Kábul, probably exceeded 1,000 men.

The triumph of the Afgháns was now complete. At the head of their struggle with the English were two persons, General Muhammad-Ján, an Afghán of good family, and the Mullah Mushk-i-Alam.

As we have seen, on the evening of the 2nd (14th) December, the English were surrounded by Afgháns, who forced them to shut themselves up in the Sherpur fortified camp. Early the next day the besieged began their defence works, and these were carried on with peculiar energy during the three following days; on the 6th (18th) December, General Roberts considered the defences complete.

On the 5th (17th) December the Afgháns made a demonstration and collected to the number of several thousand men on the Siáh-Sang and Koh-i-Asmai heights. In places the Afgháns approached to within a very short distance of the English defences—a distance not exceeding 700 paces. Individuals even came up to the very walls, and this very much disconcerted the English. A strong body of Afgháns occupied the village of Deh-Afghán. At 11 o'clock the alarm sounded in the English stronghold, and the troops were called to arms and remained at their posts till sunset. The first line of the defenders opened fire and mowed down the Afgháns with a hail of bullets, and their artillery commenced a regular cannonade. The Afgháns were therefore soon repulsed.

The demonstration that we have described appeared to General Roberts to be so disquieting that he deemed it imperative to use every endeavour to hurry up the reinforcements which he was expecting from the Pesháwar column. On the 6th (18th) December, therefore, he sent an urgent demand to General Gough to hasten up, and he assured him that between Kábul and Jagdalak there was no force of the enemy which could prevent his advance.

On the same date there was a slight skirmish under the walls of Sherpur, and in this General Roberts reported that the English loss amounted to one killed and two wounded. The same night there was a fall of snow.

By this time the Afgháns had occupied one of the villages to the east of Sherpur. During the 7th, 8th, and 9th (19th, 20th, and 21st)* December, there were some very slight skirmishes, in the course of which the Anglo-Indian force literally *fired away* quantities of its stock of ammunition.

A series of victories gained by the Afgháns before Kábul, compelled, as we have seen, a strong English force to fly in a state of panic for shelter behind the walls of Sherpur.

The English maintain that the Afgháns overcame them by superior numbers. Of this we have no doubt, though we think that when they put down the number of armed Afgháns at 40,000, they very much exaggerate the figures. We suppose, and not without grounds, as will be seen from what we shall communicate further on, that the ranks of

* The English loss between the 3rd (15th) and 10th (22nd) December amounted to five killed (including two officers) and 45 rank and file wounded.—*Author.*

Muhammad-Ján's army, together with the Kohistánis, did not contain more than 15,000 men.

Good strategy and tactics of the Afgháns before Kábul in December 1879.

The success of the Afgháns was secured by their skilful dispositions; indeed, both their strategy and their tactics cannot be questioned. The regularity with which they concentrated their forces is worthy of surprise, and reveals the existence of a deeply-laid plan. Not less remarkable was the bold dash of the Ghazniites between the Brigades of Generals Baker and Macpherson. By this movement they completely cut off General Baker's Brigade from Kábul and compelled General Macpherson to withdraw with his to the Deh-i-Mazang gorge. Then, tactically considered, one cannot but favourably remark on the exact determination of the most important point in the position taken up by the English, *viz.*, the commanding heights of the Koh-i-Asmai chain. The capture of these heights compelled General Roberts to clear out of Kábul, and it also placed General Macpherson's Brigade in a dangerous position, stationed as that Brigade was on the heights to the south of the extended position of the English. The direct result of this movement on the part of the Afgháns was the withdrawal of General Macpherson's Brigade to Sherpur.

Errors committed by General Roberts before Kábul in December 1879.

On the other hand, the English made a mass of the most unpardonable errors. In the first place, their movement to Urgandi and Maidán scattered their forces. Then the incautious detaching of General Massy's weak body of men led to the route of the English cavalry. Again, the taking up of too extended a position at Kábul—a position that did not correspond to the size of the English force—had for its result the destruction of the said position and defeat. Finally, the English generals either lost their heads, or else acted without giving due weight to the organization and strength of their enemy.

The Afgháns without artillery.

We must here invite special attention to the fact that the Afgháns had absolutely no artillery. The English say that the Afgháns, after driving them into Sherpur, did not dare to attack that post. We do not think this was the case, but hold that Muhammad-Ján would have been *foolish* to have stormed a strongly-fortified position, provided with artillery, instead of confining his attention to a close blockade of his enemy.

7.—Remarks on the character of the fighting around Kábul after its occupation by General Roberts's Force and up to the period of the investment of Sherpur.

Kábul and the surrounding heights may be considered to be one of the strongest and most important of military positions. The general outline of this position is in the form of an ellipsis with salients in certain parts.

The centres of this ellipsis are turned towards the Bála-Hissár and Sherpur. Its longer axis covers a space of 8 miles and its shorter of 6 miles. The southern, western, and northern portions of the bow of the ellipsis consist of rows of heights which command the country round. The southern heights have an altitude above the sea of from 6,309 to 7,663 feet (Takht-i-Sháh). In this part of the position there are roads from Chár-Asiáb and Chahár-Deh leading towards Kábul. In the western part of the ellipsis there is a row of heights, of which the most elevated point lies at an altitude of 6,790 feet (Koh-i-Asmai). In this portion is the famous Deh-i-Mazang gorge, through which passes the Bámián road. Into the same gorge lead also several mountain passes, such as the Koh-i-Asmai, Aurshákh, as well as a defile that opens into the Pagmán Valley. The northern part of the position is flanked by mountains which sweep round in a semi-circular form from the Pagmán Pass almost to the left bank of the Kábul river. In this neighbourhood there is a road to Kohistán. Along the eastern side of the position is the low-lying valley of the Kábul river, out of the centre of which rises up the Siáh-Sang heights (5,966 feet).

The Kábul river divides the ellipsis which we have been describing into two equal parts, and at this point there are no considerable obstacles to passage from one bank to the other. There are, moreover, in this neighbourhood great facilities in a sanitary and economic sense.

On the south side of the northern heights and consequently on the inner side of the position, there are two lakes, of which the larger or western is 3 miles long, its greatest breadth being 700 yards. The road to Kohistán, of which mention has been made above, passes between these lakes. From their position these lakes constitute an excellent defence to nearly the whole of the northern part of the position.

General Roberts endeavoured to take up this position by occupying its southern, western, and eastern portions. In this way he hoped to gain possession of Kábul and consequently to exercise a constant moral influence over the semi-irregular troops of Eastern Afghánístán. His calculation in this respect was faulty, because it was not possible to occupy so extended a position with a force the strength of which did not exceed 5,000 men. In fact, the mere occupation of such an extent of ground would require not less than 30,000 men and 100 guns. In such a case the position might be regarded as almost impregnable.

With respect to the position that we have been describing, the Sherpur fortified camp, which was held by the English, had, in a military sense, almost the importance of a reduct. But this reduct had one vital disadvantage in that all the heights around it, not excluding even those of Siáh-Sang, commanded it, and consequently, if the Afgháns had only been provided with artillery, by no possibility could the English have remained in Sherpur. We may mention, too, that the Koh-i-Asmai

heights, which also command Sherpur, are only 2 miles distant from it.

[General Soboleff here introduces a description of the Sherpur fortified camp.]

[Text resumed.]

Winter at Kábul in 1879-80.

The winter was drawing on apace, and with it the prospect of the unavoidable sufferings of the troops, who were not yet supplied with warm clothing. Now Kábul, which lies at a height of 6,400 feet above sea-level, is distinguished for the sharp extremes of its climate. In spring there is an abundant rainfall, the summer is hot, and the winter cold. When snow falls, it does not melt for two or three months, and the frosts are very sharp.

In order to insure the supply of warm clothing to the troops in Afghánistán, the Indian Government had to adopt the most energetic measures. These measures were not, however, carried out with the thought that under the orders of this same Government, there was a population of 250,000 souls, and so it was decided to turn towards Persia for assistance, whence were ordered, amongst other articles, several thousand sheep-skin coats (*poshteens*) at 7 *rupees* a piece.

Co-operation of the Persian Government.

The Persian Government, so said the *Times*, had directed its officials to render the English agents every assistance in buying whatever might be required by the Anglo-Indian Army of Operation. We have already spoken above of the services rendered by Persia in providing the English with transport resources. The English diplomatists and agents, too, at Teherán and other parts of Persia acted with great energy, and did much to facilitate the operations of the Anglo-Indian army in Afghánistán.

In addition to the measures adopted by the Administration towards assisting the troops who were destined to be besieged in Kábul, private charity was active and the Anglo-Indian papers appealed to it. The desire to have books and papers for circulation amongst the rank and file and in the hospitals was announced.

Insufficiency of forage.

The collection of forage was attended with the greatest difficulty. According to a calculation made by the Commissariat Department of the force, for the food of the cavalry and artillery horses, camels, mules, and ponies, *i.e.*, for the animals with the mounted arms, as well as those of the transport train of the force, from the 1st (13th) November till the 1st (13th) April, 150,000 packs* of provender were required. By the 3rd (15th) November the Anglo-Indian papers stated that only between

* We do not know the size of a pack. If it is one day's feed, judging by the figures given, it must be concluded that General Roberts had no pack animals at all, so that the mention of them was made only to pacify the public.—*Author.*

15,000 and 20,000 packs had been stored at Sherpur, consequently that only a tenth part of the required quantity had been secured.

In consequence of this deficiency, measures were adopted to reduce the number of horses with the force. The greater number of grass-cutters' ponies were sent away, and the ponies which had been taken from the people around, were returned to them, as there was nothing to feed them with. This circumstance still further reduced the already weak transport-train. The mobility of the English force was, moreover, still more interfered with; meanwhile some very serious expeditions were pending in the neighbourhood of Kábul. The sending away of Yakúb-Khán, in charge of a cavalry escort, to a certain extent relieved the drain on the forage stores. We must here notice yet another arrangement of the English with regard to elephants. Towards the end of October some influential Sirdárs were sent from Kábul to the neighbouring districts to collect these animals, and the sick elephants of the force were removed to Jalálábád.

The Kábul Field Force goes into winter quarters at the Sherpur fortified camp.

We have said that the approach of winter and the extremely hostile attitude of the Afghán population around Kábul induced General Roberts to adopt energetic measures to get his force safely into winter quarters and to lay in a store of provisions.

As the Bála-Hissár, in consequence of the explosion of its powder-magazines, and the threatening demeanour of the population could not be occupied by an English garrison, General Roberts deemed it more circumspect to evacuate it altogether. The citadel was therefore at once destroyed, and the wooden portion of its buildings carried off to the camp that had been selected for the winter quarters of the English force.

The site of this camp was called *Sherpur;* it had been selected for winter quarters in preference to the one on the heights of Siáh-Sang. Orders were, therefore, given to collect in it the necessary stores and to place there all the trophies taken by the English. Moreover, more than a million pounds of powder had to be removed from the Bála-Hissár, being the amount that had escaped the explosion. The Afgháns asserted that this powder belonged to the old stores handed down from the time of Dost-Muhammad.

The Sherpur camp lies a little over 1⅓ miles to the north of Kábul, and its retiring angle is turned towards that city. From the centre of the camp two oblong hillocks, called Bemáru, rise up, and these tower 250 feet over the surrounding country. The camp is encircled by a mud wall and is provided with detached forts along its faces.

The fortified camp of Sherpur was constructed by Shir-Ali, the late Amir. Along its retiring angle which faces the city of Kábul, barracks were built; these extend along two faces for a distance of 2,000

yards. The Native troops of General Roberts's force were employed to improve these barracks, to adapt them for winter quarters, to build new ones, and also to fortify the entire position. It was proposed that winter quarters should be provided for 5,000 men. By the 19th (31st) October all the troops of the Kábul Field Force, excepting General Macpherson's brigade and the Head-Quarter Staff, were transferred to the Sherpur camp. On the same date General Roberts inspected the city guard and found all well at Kábul. Fortunately for the English, when General Massy's detachment first occupied the Sherpur camp, immense stores of fire-wood were found, sufficient to last the English force five months. This circumstance was extremely favourable to them, because the deep snow of the long winter covers the neighhouring hills and makes it altogether impossible to obtain fuel. For this reason the Afgháns busy themselves about getting in their wood-supply long before the approach of autumn.

Storage of supplies at Sherpur.

In order to collect supplies sufficient to last his force for five months, General Roberts adopted energetic measures; some articles were obtained in the city, some were brought in from the neighbouring villages; but everything so got was only a little, and therefore the English were compelled to detach various parties of troops and sometimes a considerable number of men, in order to forage for supplies and to bring them in from distant points.

Thus General Roberts was obliged to make expeditions into various parts of the Kábul valley, not only to quiet and disarm the population, to collect taxes, but also to gather in grain. Not having sufficient transport, the English commanders compelled the people to carry in provisions to Sherpur, and by their extreme energy, as well as by their severe treatment of those who refused to do so, they infuriated the already exasperated populace.

General Roberts's force in fact became a foraging detachment, whose chief task consisted in obtaining the means for its future existence.

By the 3rd (15th) November it was proposed to finish the collection of provisions at Sherpur, since the existence of the force had been secured for the five following months, *i.e.*, till the beginning of April.

8.—Review of the Operations during the investment of Sherpur.

When the Anglo-Indian force was finally beaten by the Afgháns on the heights of Koh-i-Asmai, the Sherpur fortified camp was not in a condition to withstand a seriously planned attack.

General Roberts had not busied himself in time about putting this post into a proper state of defence, because he was convinced that the

Afghán capital had been finally subdued, and that the Afghán troops were defeated and scattered.

[Here is inserted an extract from a letter of the *Times* correspondent at Sherpur, showing how incomplete was the state of ths Sherpur defences during the early days of the investment of the place by Muhammad-Ján's levies.]

[Text resumed.]

These words of an eye-witness are interesting in the sense that they give us the right of once more asserting that a *panic* had taken possession of the English, and this they, with very rare exception, obstinately deny. The same evidence permits us to conclude that the English do not like to be reminded of their defeats, but seek to hide the truth. Thus on the 2nd (14th) December General Roberts was utterly routed by Muhammad-Ján, and it was only because in the early morning of the same day General Baker's troops attained a partial success that the English were enabled to believe that their triumph extended over the entire day. A non-recognition of their failures and a considerable and often ridiculous exaggeration of their successes constitute the characteristics of Englishmen. "The affair was brilliant, obstinately contested, and bloody," is the usual description which they give to their engagements, and to this they generally add that their loss amounted to one slightly wounded man. Thus, in the telegram regarding the Shutur-Gardan affair of the 7th (19th) October 1879, we read that "the attack was desperate and the position a terrible one; we were surrounded by Afgháns for the space of 72 hours, and the enemy covered with his fire the place where we got our water-supply." In this way the Shutur-Gardan fighting is raised to a level scarcely below the defence of Sevastópol or of the Shipka. The Queen-Empress sends a special messsage and in warm words thanks the heroes of "this brilliant affair." Meanwhile, the entire loss of the English, during these three days of *stubborn* fighting, amounts to *seven* men.

During the night of the 2nd (14th) December, General Roberts's force rapidly took up its position in the Sherpur fortified camp.

The defence works began at 9 A.M. on Monday, the 3rd (15th) December. All the troops took part in the engineering work, and by the evening the meagre defences had been considerably augmented.

Long before the English defeats at Kábul, the Engineer Colonel (Perkins) had submitted two plans for placing the defences of Sherpur in proper order. The essence of the first plan consisted in fortifying the Bemáru heights, as the key of the position, by a system of trenches and batteries capable of holding 1,300 men. According to the second plan, it was proposed to strengthen these heights by the construction of ten towers to hold small garrisons. But, as we have seen, General Roberts did not think it necessary to give to this matter any special attention,

but when the force of circumstances obliged him to do so he entered into the work with the energy and determination which characterises him.

As this Sherpur affair comprises a very interesting episode in the autumn and winter campaign of the English which we are describing, we consider it useful to make a few general remarks on the measures adopted by the English in connection with the engineering and artillery defences of the fortified camp.

Engineering Works.

[General Soboleff's description of these is evidently based on English sources of information. It would, therefore, be superfluous to translate this portion of his work.]

[Text resumed.]

From this brief sketch of the engineering works of Sherpur our readers will easily perceive that General Roberts's force, which, until recently, had been deemed invincible, had now assumed a strictly *passsive attitude of defence*. General Roberts, in immuring his troops in Sherpur, plainly showed everybody that he did not reckon on speedily entering the open field again, for he presented to his engineers a wide sphere for the display of their activity. It seems to us that the careful closing of all the exits from Sherpur, even the smallest, is a sufficient corroboration of our statement, repeated more than once, that the English fled on the evening of the 2nd (14th) December, after the general engagement which they had lost.

Artillery Defensive Measures.

[After giving, from data taken from the English published accounts, a description of the artillery defences of Sherpur, General Soboleff continues his narrative.]

Thus the artillery defences of Sherpur consisted of 20 English and 10 Afghán guns, or 30 in all, but of these, 4 were almost useless. The rest of the Afghán artillery was not available for defence, probably because the ammunition for it had been left in the Bála-Hissár. It may even be supposed that the English had not succeeded in removing to Sherpur all the artillery which the Afgháns had abandoned at Kábul.

Distribution of the Garrison of Sherpur.

[Under this head nothing more appears than can be ascertained by referring to the English published accounts of the investment of Sherpur.]

The English now endeavoured to take possession of the so-called Sháh-Bágh,* but they did not succeed in doing so. "It seemed," said

* It lies to the south of Sherpur.—*Author.*

the *Times*, "that the last attempt only concentrated the enemy's forces and made his fire into the interior of Sherpur hotter."

More recent English reports tell us that, during the whole of the 10th (22nd) December, the Afgháns made several separate attacks on General Roberts's force.* We altogether discredit this statement, and have grounds for the belief that, on the date quoted, the Afghán forces only slightly exceeded that of the English, and we are further of opinion that the latter did not display the requisite boldness to carry out an energetic sortie and so scatter Muhammad-Ján's army. During the whole of this day the Afgháns collected in masses in all the villages lying on the east front of Sherpur, *i.e.*, along the Jalálábád road.

The Afghán victory of the 2nd (14th) December had produced a strong impression on the English, and, although the Afgháns had evinced no kind of intention of attacking Sherpur, General Roberts was expecting an assault from hour to hour. His troops all slept at their posts, and were scarcely ever able to take advantage of their barracks. An evening never passed without an officer coming to caution his men of a probable night attack. Hence it was not surprising that the men were jaded and sick.

On the evening of the 10th (22nd) December, General Roberts received information that the Afgháns contemplated an attack at dawn on the following day. The General was also told that the signal agreed upon for the commencement of the assault was to be a fire that would be lit on the Koh-i-Asmai heights. Late that evening final orders were issued to the troops regarding the expected attack, and directing each man to be at his post at 4 A.M. next day. During the whole of the 10th (22nd) it had been noticed at Sherpur that "large masses of men with immense numbers of standards"† were collecting in the villages lying on the road towards Kohistán. It was supposed that the southern body of Afgháns would consist of Logaris and of other tribes adjacent to Kábul.

At 6 A.M. on the 11th (23rd) December, the signal which had been agreed upon was lit on the Koh-i-Asmai heights. Immediately afterwards firing was heard in various directions. The *Times* correspondent writes that the troops stationed along the south face of the Sherpur fort "either saw, or fancied that they saw, a body of Afgháns in movement."

As the Kohistánis approached the village of Bemáru, the English met them with rifle-fire, and immediately both rifle and artillery fire was opened from all the faces of the English entrenchments.

* Telegram to the *Times*, dated Kabul 14th (26th) December.—*Author.*

† This passage is extracted from the *Times*. In Central Asia it is customary for the natives to use in battle standards of various kinds. We doubt whether the Kohistánis mustered in sufficient numbers. There were probably not more than 2,000 of them, but since "in the presence of fear the eyes are large" everything appeared to the English in an exaggerated form."—*Author.*

This hot fire went on for more than two hours, during which the infantry did not spare their cartridges, and the artillery fired away their rounds. An eye-witness, who was present the whole day, expresses the conviction that this terrific fire indicated the "serious" nature of the attack. He says that the telegraph and the *heliograph* were in constant use; and that General Roberts remained the whole time on the west face of Sherpur, where he was in uninterrupted communication with the commanders of the several posts of defence. The English say that the fiercest attack was made on the village of Bemáru, at the eastern end of the Bemáru heights, where, as we know, General Hugh Gough commanded. Of this General we may remark that when he was struck by an Afghán bullet in the chest he only received a simple contusion; his foresight had been so great that he had previously clothed himself in a coat of mail.

By about 9 A.M. a body of Afgháns had occupied a small village outside Sherpur and at the eastern end of the Bemáru heights. Against this village the English directed the fire of one field gun.

Judging by all these facts, as described by the English themselves, and after rejecting evident exaggerations, it may be supposed that the Afghán attack on Bemáru was not of a serious character. Nevertheless the English generals appeared to think it was a very serious affair, for General Baker ordered up a large proportion of the general reserve, and so a portion of the 3rd Sikhs were transferred from the western end of the Bemáru heights.

English accounts tell us that at this period a terrible fusillade was going on from the western and southern faces of Sherpur, and that "large bands of Afghán soldiers, encouraging one another with wild shouts, made attempts, by means of scaling ladders, to effect a lodgment on the south face of Sherpur." But as on this side the English had placed a strong complement of artillery, "General Roberts," says the *Times* correspondent, "knew that nothing serious was to be apprehended in this direction." This statement of an eye-witness clearly shows that the Afghán attacks, on the side of Kábul, existed solely in the imagination of the English, for if it were true that large masses of Afgháns with wild shouts really came up to the very walls, and that some of them attempted to scale them with ladders, General Roberts would probably have paid some attention to the fact.

Having become aware that a large proportion of Muhammad-Ján's levies had already gone to their homes, that General Charles Gough's column from Jagdalak was within half a march of Sherpur, that not more than 6,000 of the Afghán levies were now in front of Sherpur, the rest being inhabitants of the city, General Roberts at length resolved to carry out a sortie.

For this sortie, the 5th Panjáb Cavalry, the 5th Gurkhas, and four guns

were told off. The column, on getting clear of the precincts of the fort, passed through a gorge of the Bemáru heights and then turned towards the north-east with the object of bringing the village that the Afgháns had occupied under a flank fire. The English did not make up their minds to attack this village, although it would have been very easy to have done so, but opened on it a cross-fire.

Finding themselves under a cross-fire, the Afgháns began to gradually clear out of the village. General Roberts, who kept to his self-appointed place on the west face of the position, received at 11 A.M. news that the village had been evacuated by the Afgháns, and, somewhat later, that the enemy had begun a general retirement in the direction of the nearest pass leading into Kohistán. He therefore now ordered out the whole of his cavalry, under General Massy, with instructions to pursue the retreating enemy. Immediately afterwards, the General himself rode out to the Bemáru heights and gave directions for the occupation of the village so recently evacuated by the Afgháns.

A portion of General Roberts' force was now sent to occupy the villages along the road to Butkhák, near which could be seen General Charles Gough's camp.

[General Soboleff here quotes a telegram from General Roberts notifying that he hoped shortly to re-occupy the Bála-Hissár and the city of Kábul, and also his despatch dated 12th (24th) December, informing the Government of India of the raising of the siege of Sherpur.]

[Text resumed.]

And so General Gough did not reach Sherpur till the 12th (24th) December. General Roberts was, therefore, not a little proud at having got quit of the Afgháns before his arrival. Why then did General Gough move so slowly? We have explained this partly in one of the preceding chapters; but why he did not hasten up when he heard the firing on the 11th (23rd) December, we do not know. This question is the less intelligible to us seeing that on the night of the 10th (22nd) December, the 12th Bengal Cavalry made its way from Sherpur to Lataband, to meet General Gough, and only lost three men *en route*.

In the afternoon of the 12th (24th) December, the 5th Panjáb Cavalry entered Kábul, where General Hills was once more installed as Governor. The bazár of the city was in a very pitiable condition, nearly all the shops had been destroyed and trade was almost at a stand-still. The English troops went to look at the Bála-Hissár, but none were stationed there through fear of explosions. According to the statements of Hindu traders there was a reign of terror in the city from the 3rd (15th) December. Women who were not Mussulmánis were raped in the streets; children were seized and threat-

Whilst the investment of Sherpur lasted, anarchy reigned in the city of Kábul.

ened with death; men were shot. The Kizil-Báshis were spared only when they consented to take an oath on the Kurán to be faithful Muhammadans. All the magazines of the Bála-Hissár were emptied by the Afgháns, who carried off quantities of cartridges and war stores of all kinds. Explosions occurred in the citadel during a period extending over several days, and many people perished in them, and in one day 100 persons were thus killed.

As we have stated, the English cried out about their victory over the Afgháns and their brilliant defence of Sherpur; but, as we have seen, there was not a single feature in that defence which could be called brilliant. An English force had shut itself up in a fort and dared not venture out!

Defence of Sherpur by the English and that of Sámarkand by the Russians compared.

We cannot refrain from here comparing the defence of Sherpur with that of Sámarkand by our famous Turkistán troops in the summer of 1868. The exterior circumstances of both were very similar. Sherpur was invested by an army under Muhammad-Ján; Sámarkand was surrounded by armed levies from Shahr-i-Sabz as well as by the inhabitants of the town itself.

To the English there were opposed, including inhabitants of the city of Kábul, 30,000 men [these figures relate to the 2nd (14th), December], and the same number was arrayed against the garrison of Sámarkand. The investment of Sherpur lasted nine days; that of Sámarkand seven. So much for the resemblance, now for the difference: the Anglo-Indian force at Sherpur consisted of 5,000 bayonets and sabres and 30 guns; the Russian garrison of Sámarkand of 752 bayonets and sabres and 28 guns.* The Afgháns never stormed Sherpur, whilst the citadel of Sámarkand was subjected to incessant and fierce attacks. The English never made any sorties at all; the Russian garrison of the Sámarkand citadel availed itself of every favourable opportunity and issued forth from its entrenchments and thence our loss amounted during the siege to 48 killed and 171 wounded, total 219. The English lost at Sherpur 89 men, including 7 killed. In a word, the strong garrison of Sherpur confined itself to a strictly passive defence.

We have grounds for the belief that the English commanders were very uneasy as to the fate of Sherpur. The signal lit at 6 A. M. on the morning of the 11th (23rd) December so upset the English generals that their uneasiness at times almost amounted to frenzy. As we have seen, the Afgháns did not really desire to storm the position, and yet the English made preparations for a desperate defence. They inopportunely and in a perfectly useless manner exploded mines, from which cause two of their own officers lost their lives.

* Of these, 24 were taken from the Bukhárans, but amongst them 20 were useless.—*Author.*

At length, when the Afgháns had withdrawn to a becoming distance, the English resolved to occupy the villages which lay on General Charles Gough's* line of advance.

Thus the affair of the 11th (23rd) December terminated, and yet the English shouted that they had gained a brilliant victory over the Afgháns.

We, however, do not regard the matter at all in that light.

The fact was, Muhammad-Ján clearly perceived that without artillery it was quite impossible for him to take the strong position of the English at Sherpur. He hoped that by a prolonged blockade he would compel them to retire on Jalálábád or else surrender to him. He reckoned principally on the Ghilzais, who had displayed hostility against the advanced detachment of the Pesháwar column; but when he saw that this hope would not be realised, he recognised that it would be useless to sacrifice men's lives in throwing them at Sherpur, and so he engaged himself in the orderly withdrawal of the bulk of his forces from the neighbourhood of Kábul. Of the approach of the advanced portion of the Pesháwar column he knew better than General Roberts, and he therefore hastened to carry out his skilfully-considered plan of retreat. In order to effect this he made a false attack on the English fortified post, and, since the Kohistán line of retirement lay towards the north, *i.e.*, in a direction opposite to that of the Ghazniites, Maidánis, and Logaris, he imposed on the first the task of taking off the attention of the English from the retirement in the other direction of the bulk of his forces.

The English again let slip a favourable opportunity of inflicting a serious defeat on a portion of Muhammad-Ján's army, and so they enabled this clever Afghán General to carry out one of the most difficult and complex of military manœuvres—the orderly retreat of an army without loss. We may remark here that our conclusions are supported by the revelations of the English themselves.

The English only quitted Sherpur when the Afgháns had quite disappeared from the neighbourhood of Kábul. In what, then, was comprised their victory?

They were in a state of ecstasy at having at length been freed from a *humiliating* position. This joy we can understand, but their operations are scarcely deserving of praise; on the other hand, Muhammad-Ján's whole line of conduct merits it to the full.

A Lahore telegram to the *Daily News*, dated 17th (29th) December, mentioned that the Afghán forces which attacked Sherpur numbered 6,000 men.

* We would remind our readers that General Charles Gough held a brigade command in the Pesháwar column under General Bright, whilst his brother General Hugh Gough held a similar post in General Roberts's force.—*Author.*

During the siege the English loss amounted to 5 killed and 33 wounded.

We will here add some observations regarding the state of General Roberts's force during the siege—observations that will not be without use in enabling our readers to understand the whole character of that force.

9.—Observations regarding the state of General Roberts's Force during the Seige of Sherpur.

Supplies.

We have already said that by the middle of November the Commissariat Depatment of the Kábul Field Force reported that it had collected in Sherpur supplies for five months. When, therefore, Muhammad-Ján invested Sherpur, the English public, who were alarmed as to the fate of General Roberts's force, were greatly comforted on being told that the troops had an abundant supply of provisions. Great, therefore, was the amazement of the same public when, in the beginning of December, the London correspondent of the *Neue Freie Presse*, who received his information from a trustworthy source and one very partial to the English, announced that General Roberts's force had provisions, not for five months, but only for three. It is very possible, however, that both statements may have been correct, for there is reason to suppose that a portion of the provisions stored by the English in the Bála-Hissár fell into the hands of the Afgháns.

Forage.

The Commissariat Department itself admitted that the amount of forage it had in store not only did not suffice for all the horses and transport animals with the force, but that it would not meet the requirements of the cavalry and artillery horses alone. The forage stored represented from $\frac{1}{7}$th to $\frac{1}{10}$th the total quantity needed for five months.

Transport.

We have already said that on account of the extreme insufficiency of forage, General Roberts decided on curtailing the already very weak transport-train of his force, and hence his troops were deprived of any sort of mobility. In the beginning of December, the *Times* made the remark that "the whole difficulty of the question might be summed up in one word—*transport*."

[Here follows a further extract from the paper named, which goes to prove how difficult the question of transport at Kábul had become.]

Warm clothing.

In one of the preceding chapters we said that the Anglo-Indian Government had turned to Persia for help in obtaining sheep-skin coats (*poshteens*). We know nothing about the celerity with which these were supplied, but we think they could not have reached General Roberts

before the siege of Sherpur, because his troops during that time suffered from the cold. Private charity, to which an appeal had been made, could not do much in the way of assistance, as there were not enough pack-animals. One despatch had informed us that in the autumn the Momands had seized a transport-train laden with warm clothing. It was also reported from Kábul that the cold winter, with heavy snow-storms, which had set in, had proved how insufficient was the clothing of the Native soldiery in the ranks of the Indian army, and that therefore lung diseases had very much increased amongst them.

[Here is given an extract from the *Pioneer*, which proves how pressing was the want of warm clothing with General Roberts's force.]

Fuel.

It has been seen that when the English occupied Sherpur they found there large stores of fire-wood which had been laid in by the Afghán for winter use. We know also that the investment of Sherpur had obliged the English to cut down several of the orchards which lay around the fortified camp, and the wood thus procured was used partly in the laying down of *abatis* and partly for fuel. Prior to this, too, a good deal of the timber obtained from the demolition of the buildings of the Bála-Hissár had been removed to Sherpur.

It would seem, therefore, that in the matter of firewood, General Roberts's force had been sufficiently secured, and yet one of the communications received from Kábul tells us that this force was in want of fuel. This strange circumstance can only be explained by the fact that, during the nine days' investment of Sherpur, General Roberts's troops, being obliged to remain on all occasions outside their barracks, and being without warm clothing, lit continual bonfires in order to keep themselves warm, and so reduced the stores of wood.*

War stores.

In the Bála-Hissár there had been collected considerable supplies of powder, gun charges, and cartridges; but General Roberts had not troubled himself about the removal of all this war *matériel* to Sherpur, and had not even succeeded in reducing the amount by the beginning of December. At the beginning of the investment of Sherpur, General Roberts's force had 300 rounds per man. The expenditure of cartridges during the nine days' blockade was most wasteful, and therefore it was not surprising that the Kábul Field Force, by the end of December, should have been in want of the most necessary portion of war *matériel*.

Sanitary condition of the force.

Insufficiency of warm clothing and heavy duty, such as the Kábul Field Force experienced from the end of November to the middle of De-

* The *Times*, in its review of the campaign, wrote: "Besides forage, General Roberts's force was in the greatest need of fuel."—*Author*.

cember 1879, produced in its ranks disease of all kinds. In a despatch dated 8th (20th) December 1879, General Roberts wrote, " three officers are ill with small-pox, and on account of the cold lung diseases are on the increase. In other respects the health of the troops is good." In a telegram to the *Standard* of the same date, it is stated that the sick of the Sherpur garrison comprised 4 per cent. British and 6 per cent. of the Natives. If, then, we put the strength of this garrison down at 5,0000 men, the sick amounted to about 270 men. Lung diseases constituted the chief disease, and these principally occurred amongst the Native troops; then came dysentery. The sufferings of the troops were increased by the severity of the winter. During the night of the 7th (19th) December there was a fall of snow at Kábul, and it soon lay thick on the ground. On the 13th (25th) December, and consequently the third day after the raising of the siege of Sherpur, snow again fell and covered the ground to a depth of 3 inches.

Here, then, are the general features of the condition of General Roberts's force towards the end of 1879. This condition can scarcely be called brilliant.

In any case the experience of this war does not admit of the right of maintaining, as English writers have done and continue to do, with the exception of Norman* and others, that the military power of England in India is absolutely awe-inspiring, and that the means and resources of British India are sufficient not only for the carrying on a war with any Asiatic State, but also successfully with an European army, should such think of appearing on the frontiers of Afghánistán.

We have described above the condition of General Roberts's force on its release from the " humiliating " (as the English themselves expressed it) position involved in the investment of Sherpur. We have seen, too, that this position was in all respects a grievous one. Although the garrison of Sherpur had sufficient food, it had not a supply of forage sufficient to last even one month. Transport can scarcely be said to have existed. The troops had been supplied with warm clothing, but in insufficient quantities. Fuel frequently ran short. War stores of all kinds were failing, and the sanitary condition of the force was unsatisfactory.

The Anglo-Indian troops were harassed by service in Afghánistán, and a very bad spirit now began to show itself amongst them. They began to desert, and towards the end of May there fled from the Kábul garrison to Muhammad-Ján, at Ghazni, one Native officer and six *sipáhis*, who took with them their arms and equipment.†

* Probably Sir Henry Norman.—W. E. G.

† Telegram to the *Standard* dated 19th (31st) May 1880.—*Author.*

10.—General Soboleff condemns General Roberts's minor Operations around Kábul, on the ground that they needlessly weakened his own Force and irritated the surrounding population.

General Roberts's mistake in the disposition of his troops during the fighting round Kábul in December 1879.

In our opinion, General Roberts made the great mistake of dividing his already too small force into two and even three separate bodies, and of sending General Baker by a circuitous road several marches from Kábul. We think that this mistake was occasioned by the *contempt* he had for the Afgháns, but a cautious General should not despise any enemy. This mistake was the more unpardonable because General Roberts knew that he had to deal with an enemy who, even though he was Asiatic, had been organising his forces for some considerable time, and who had, moreover, inflicted on his troops several partial defeats in the Maidán valley. We will not here allude to the Afghán successes on the Shutur-Gardan Pass, about which the English do not like to speak, but which had, nevertheless, inspirited and given assurance to the Afgháns. Meanwhile, the Kábul Field Force was sending out small expeditionary detachments with various objects.

[Here mention is made of the attack on a company of the 67th Foot by 1,000 Safis and Togasis as it was conveying a foraging party through the Lughmán Valley.]

[Text resumed.]

This encounter showed that in the direction of Kohistán all was not going on well. News had been received, too, that Yusuf-Khán, at the head of his tribe, had resolved to openly enter upon a war with the English. For this reason General Macpherson's brigade was temporarily stationed at Butkhák.

The English had proposed to make a *reconnaissance*, on a lage scale, into Kohistán, both in order to learn the position of affairs there and to explore the mountain passes leading into the country. We may here observe that there are several roads leading from the valley of the Kábul river into that of the Amu-Daria which pass through Kohistán.

Many of the conquerors of India have made use of these routes. Hence a serious expedition into Kohistán would partake of the character of a military-political event. But the idea of such an expedition was not carried out, because Kohistán was at this time in a very disturbed state.

On the 18th (30th) November a squadron of the 9th Lancers and some squadrons of the 5th Panjáb Cavalry made a *reconnaissance* towards the Koh-i-Dáman, where rumour stated that 3,000 Kohistánis had collected. The party returned without even finding a trace of the presence of any Afghán force.

As to the character of these Kohistánis, let us here say a few words regarding the relation of these mountaineers towards the English authorities temporarily exercising power at Kábul.

The obstinate resistance of the Afghán population placed the authority of the English in a very difficult situation, and compelled the English commanders to seek to establish close relations with the representatives of the people. Of any kind of serious expedition into the interior of the country, much less of any fresh military triumph, neither General Roberts nor any other of the English commanders could even dream. We have seen that the expedition into Kohistán, which was sent in the middle of December under the command of General Baker, ended in failure, and, without having come up with Mir-Batcha, the principal chief in the country, was compelled to return to Kábul in the course of a few days. An eye-witness says that this expedition returned to Kábul in a "miserable condition."

Let us now turn to the operations of General Baker, who was conducting several expeditions to the west and south of Kábul. On the 27th October (8th November), a detachment, consisting of the 3rd Sikh Infantry, 5th Panjáb Cavalry, and two mountain guns, under General Baker, started for the Chahár-Deh Valley, which lies close to Kábul, and after surrounding the village of Indik, took away the arms of its inhabitants and carried off 50 Afgháns as prisoners, the charge against them being that they had fought against the English at the battle of Chár-Asiáb; as if any of these Afgháns would have fought for the English!

Certain natives who were favourably disposed towards the English warned them that at Ghazni and its neighbourhood hostile Afgháns were collecting and were forming a regular army against them. The English military leaders, infatuated by their first successes, at first placed no credence in these revelations, but as the rumour regarding the collection of large bodies at Ghazni was repeated, General Roberts decided to devote serious attention to the statement, and he therefore despatched in the direction of Ghazni a fairly large force.

As the nucleus of the Afghán army, which was forming at Ghazni, the three Afghán mountain regiments, which Yakúb-Khán had sent there soon after the Kábul massacre, may be indicated. As we have already seen, these corps were too late to take part in the battle of Chár-Asiáb.

The next day General Roberts returned to Kábul, but General Baker's detachment remained in the Maidán valley, and was engaged in the gradual removal to Kábul of the forage that had just been seized.

A portion of the inhabitants of the Maidán valley now declared their allegiance to the English. Indeed, certain villages received the English troops with outward signs of joy, and yet, with the prospect of the near

approach of two small Afghán detachments, they displayed a readiness to fall on the English headlong.

There was of course no idea now of an expedition to Ghazni.

After marching his column to the Maidán valley, through which there is a road towards Ghazni, General Baker advanced with extraordinary slowness.

On the 8th (20th November), his cavalry, which had been sent to take possession of several villages that were openly hostile to the English, came unexpectedly on some Afgháns who had taken up a strong position. On being met by small-arm fire and having no infantry support, the English cavalry decided not to attack the Afgháns, and so they retired.

The extreme slowness of General Baker's movements and the opposition which he was encountering from the local populace induced General Roberts to move out on the 10th (22nd) November from Kábul. The next day he reached Baker's detachment. The state of affairs appeared so serious, that General Roberts determined on attacking the Afgháns with an entire brigade. But this attack the Afgháns did not await, and after firing a few shots at long ranges retired to the hills.

In revenge for this failure, the English gave up to *pillage* and *fire* the villages in the neighbourhood.

All these expeditions were really quite useless, so that when General Roberts's force at Kábul was attacked and shut up in Sherpur, and when the staff of the Indian army hastened to organise fresh forces, in order to despatch reinforcements to Kábul, it was decided to put an end to useless fighting with the inhabitants of the Kuram valley, to concentrate the troops that were scattered about over numerous posts, and to bring away those that were found to be superfluous.

Having been delivered from the army of Muhammad-Ján, General Roberts resolved to again advance to the attack. Ignoring the fact that for aggressive operations he had not sufficient transport, he ordered General Baker to march towards Kohistán, and having sought out the band of Kohistánis under Mir-Batcha to destroy it.

Accordingly, General Baker started on the 15th (27th) December at the head of 1,200 men and four guns.

As might have been foreseen, this expedition was of no use to the English. The detachment reached Mir-Batcha's fort, which had been abandoned by the Kohistánis, and destroyed its walls; it never fired a shot, as it met with no one.

British India was at this time passing through an uneasy time. *The power of the English had been not very wisely placed on the card.* Public opinion had assailed General Roberts, whom it blamed for recent events.

Although the English assert that the Chár-Asiáb affair, in which their troops, under the command of Colonel Jenkins, successfully met an

Afghán attack, was amongst the most brilliant episodes of the whole campaign, that the conduct of their troops was above all praise, that they displayed exemplary heroism, and so forth, we have grounds for the belief that the affair in question can in no way be considered to have been a success for the English, since the main object for the accomplishment of which Colonel Jenkins' detachment had been sent out was, on account of the Afghán attack, altogether unattained. Thus, in reality, the strategical success was on the side of the Afgháns, whilst the tactical success remained with the English.

General Roberts dreaded a fresh attack from the Afghán population around Sherpur, and this dread was intensified from the fact that during a whole week no news reached him from General Ross's force.

The Viceroy telegraphed from Simla on the 17th (29th) April as follows :—"A messenger arrived from Kábul yesterday 16th (28th). He states that bands of the Wardak and Logar Afgháns attacked General Ross on Sunday 12th (24th) April; that a serious encounter ensued, wherein the Afgháns were utterly routed with the loss of 1,200 men in killed. Our loss is not mentioned. In consequence of this defeat the Logaris have returned to their homes. The whole country is in a state of complete anarchy, and the transmission of letters is attended with very great difficulty."

This information has been shown to be perfectly untrue, and it is worthy of surprise that the Viceroy of India should resolve to telegraph the tale of any kind of messenger without putting it to the test of proper inquiry.

11.—Summary of the Operations of the Khaibar Column under General Bright, and criticism on the slow advance of General Gough's Brigade to the relief of Sherpur.

The cantonment of Pesháwar served as the base for the Pesháwar column, and the line of its communications extended through Jamrud, the Khaibar pass, the town of Jalálábád, and onwards through the Khurd-Kábul Pass to the town of Kábul. The entire distance from Pesháwar to Kábul is 192$\frac{5}{6}$ miles. The distance between the more important points is thus shown :—

Pesháwar cantonment to—	Miles.
The Village of Jamrud	13$\frac{1}{3}$
„ „ Dakka	33$\frac{2}{3}$
„ Town of Jalálábád	41$\frac{1}{2}$
„ Village of Jagdalak	51$\frac{1}{6}$
„ „ Khurd-Kábul	33$\frac{2}{3}$
„ Town of Kábul	19$\frac{1}{2}$
Total	192$\frac{5}{6}$

The characteristics of the Khaibar, Khurd-Khaibar, and Khurd-Kábul passes, the reader will find in Appendix II of the present work.* From this description it is apparent that the Pesháwar-Kábul line of operations does not of itself present any insuperable difficulties. The highest point in the Khaibar pass lies at an altitude of 3,373 feet above sea-level. The Khurd-Kábul pass is very insignificant, but its highest point lies at an altitude of 6,500 feet. The experience of the campaigns of 1839-42 and of 1878-79 showed that along these routes are scattered numerous Afghán races, robbers by nature, freedom-loving and deep haters of the English. This enmity to the English has been fanned by the Mussulmán priesthood and upheld by the plundering instincts of the tribal leaders. It has, moreover, occasioned to the English, in the course of their operations in the Kábul valley, such manifold difficulties as to place their troops each time in a very difficult position. The principal objective of the campaign, the city of Kábul, was put out of sight in the face of the incessant strife with the neighbouring mountaineers, so that the secondary object of the campaign, the protection of the line of operations, became the principal object. The Indian Government recognising this placed the task of obtaining possession of the city of Kábul on the Kuram column, and made it the duty of the Pesháwar column to keep open the road from Pesháwar to Kábul.

Tribes along the Khaibar route.

From Pesháwar to Kábul by this route is about 293½ miles.

The Pesháwar column had scarcely any of the necessary transport. In the province of the Panjáb, which served as the base of this column, the local transport resources had been completely exhausted during the first phase of the campaign; it became necessary, therefore, to seek out the required transport in the more distant provinces of India. Especial attention was directed to the Bombay Presidency. At Bombay itself and at other points of the same Presidency, a large number of oxen and ponies were collected, and these were sent to Sukkur, whence some were taken off to supplement the transport train of the Southern Column and some went to the Kuram and Pesháwar columns. Of course all the pack animals which it was possible to find in the Panjáb were seized by the English. Energetic measures were taken to secure the necessary transport for the Pesháwar column: the right of the strongest received a very wide application and still the object in view was not attained, for the Pesháwar column remained for a long time without transport. Hence arose that surprising delay which attended the commencement of the operations of this column.

But there were other reasons for the delay as well. The several branches of the service were not up to strength, for the losses of the past

Regiments below their proper numerical strength.

* Not translated.—W. E. G.

campaign had not been made good; moreover, many men were away on summer leave, and there were many sick. Towards the close of the first phase of the campaign, cholera had been very prevalent in the ranks of the Pesháwar column, no single portion of which had altogether escaped. When the war was over and the troops were once more under proper shelter and got sufficient rest, the disease died away. But as soon as the fresh campaign opened towards the west and the troops were again subjected to the conditions of warfare, cholera re-appeared. Thus a letter which was inserted in the *Daily News** dated 13th (25th) September, said that cholera had broken out amongst the troops stationed at Pesháwar, and that the 2 9th foot had lost five men in one day. Subsequently the disease made its appearance at other places. The Viceroy telegraphed on the 17th (29th) September:† "Cholera is epidemic only between Ráwulpindi and Jamrud, and there have been several cases at Ali Masjid."

[General Soboleff now gives the several links in the Pesháwar line of operations and the names of the officers appointed to command at each.

After informing his Russian readers as to the strength and composition of the Peshawár column, he thus writes.]

[Text resumed.]

In the description of the movements of the Pesháwar column we perceive how slowly the various arms were mobilised, and how they were dispersed over the line of communications.

Slow method of mobilisation on the Pesháwar line, and scattered positions of the several posts.

When the mobilisation of a fresh force for service in Afghánistán was notified, the several details told off for the Pesháwar column were in the most pitiable condition.

In addition to the main store selected for the army at Pesháwar, it was ordered that a whole series of *étappen* along the line of operations should be established, and that at these should be formed store-depôts of the second class.

Supply-depôts on the lines of communication.

[General Soboleff now gives the disposition of the Pesháwar column along the line of its advance, and also the several dates on which each point was taken up.]

[Text resumed.]

Such, then, were the circumstances when the advanced guard of the Pesháwar column debouched from the Khaibar pass.

As soon as trustworthy information had been received of the fate of the English Mission at Kábul, the detachment in the Khaibar pass received

* No. 10434.—*Author.* † *Daily News* No. 10436.—*Author.*

orders to move on to Dakka, and an intimation that in its place troops would be pushed forward from Pesháwar. But it was not found possible to carry out this arrangement, and therefore the order was cancelled.

The chiefs of the tribes along this pass and the more influential persons among them punctually received subsidies from the English, and it is therefore in no way surprising that the Afridis and other Afghán races adjacent to it should have guaranteed the safety of the English troops in those portions of the road towards Kábul which had been placed under their charge, or that the Shinwáris should display a readiness to furnish provisions to the invading column. With regard to the powerful Momand tribe, there was a rumour that a large body of them had left Lálpura and had taken up a position at Dakka; further, that the ruler of Lálpura had raised the Momands and the inhabitants of Bajour against the English. From Jalálábád news was received dated the 1st (13th) September, to the effect that the people were in tumult, and that there had appeared in that city from Kábul some persons who were preaching a holy war against the infidels. From Gandamak it was reported that some Afghán troops had made their appearance there. Meanwhile the local officials, who were performing their functions in the name of the Amir, had advised the people to preserve order and to render the English every assistance in their march on Kábul.

Thus all the talk and rumour, that the junction of the Kábul and Pesháwar columns would be opposed by armed bands of Ghilzais and other Afghán tribes, were all destitute of foundation. Nevertheless, the attitude of the people along the line of communications was not favourable to the English, but they were restrained, as we make bold to think, from any open hostility by the fact that Yakúb-Khán was still at Kábul, and although, as they knew, had been placed under a guard, their hopes that he would be restored to the position of Amir had not yet died away amongst them.

Junction of the Kábul Field Force and the Pesháwar column.

The meeting of Generals Macpherson and Bright took place on the 26th October (7th November) at Kata-Sang.

This event was of extraordinary importance for the English troops at Kábul, who had had no communication with India since the 17th (29th) October.

Communication was finally established through the Lataband pass, as this shortened the distance between Pesháwar and Kábul by 20 miles. Thus the distance between these two points was reduced from 192 to 172 miles. Although the Khurd-Kábul route is in reality more practicable and more used by caravans and travellers generally, still it was not adopted for *moral* reasons; the English in fact tried to forget even the name of a pass full of terrible associations for them.

The position beyond the Surkháb right up to Jagdalak was secured by a post held by a detachment of the Guides, 2nd Gurkhas, and the Hazára Mountain Battery. The head-quarters of General Gough's brigade were at Jagdalak; those of General Bright's division were at Gandamak.

General Macpherson's brigade hastened back to Kábul, where matters were becoming complicated, still he was obliged to halt for some time at Butkhak in order to enable the transport with the sick and wounded to reach Jagdalak.

The establishment of direct communication between Pesháwar and Kábul was of extraordinary importance to General Roberts's force, for, as we have seen, it had been pushed forward for the occupation of Kábul. Although in light marching order, and almost without transport of any kind, provisions had been procured along the line of its march, and afterwards at Kábul the troops were greatly in want of war stores, rum, tobacco, and other necessaries for a campaign.

As soon as communication with India had been opened there began a movement of transport from and to Kábul. The extreme insufficiency of transport resources and the disorganisation of the Transport Department made it impossible to despatch to Kábul all the provisions necessary for the troops in the required quantities, but it was well that the possibility existed at all of despatching anything.

The Kábul Field Force required bringing up to strength, for it had, in the first place, entered on the campaign with its ranks under proper strength, and secondly, those ranks had been again thinned by losses suffered in engagements with the Afgháns and by sickness.

Large number of sick and wounded.

On the other hand, there had accumulated at Kábul such a number of sick and wounded that it was necessary that these should be sent to the rear, for their presence with the main body uselessly burdened the force and deprived it of mobility; the frosts, too, which had set in, and the extremely bad shelter of the troops, were not conducive to the speedy recovery of the sick.

General Roberts asks for reinforcements.

The series of victories gained by the Afgháns, convinced General Roberts of the instability of English rule at Kábul and of the weakness of his own force. He was therefore obliged to ask for prompt assistance from the Pesháwar column.

When we described the investment of Sherpur we reviewed in great detail the operations of the Pesháwar column under the command of Major-General Bright. We have seen that the troops of this column, whose numerical strength was so exaggerated in the official reports of the Indian Government, were in reality but few in number; that they were, so to speak, chained to their respective posts; that they had many sick;

that they were badly supplied with provisions, and that their transport was quite insufficient. At the most critical period of the campaign, when Lieutenant-General Roberts's force was exposed to destruction by the levies under Muhammad-Ján, the Pesháwar column, in spite of repeated appeals for assistance, with the greatest difficulty managed to detach a weak brigade, and this without any baggage and only six days' supply of provisions, moved on Kábul with striking tardiness.

Meanwhile, troops were on the march throughout the entire line, which extended from Pesháwar to Jagdalak. Their movements were hastened as far as the state of the transport allowed of this being done.

[Here the dates are given of the arrival at different points of various details.]

[Text resumed.]

The news conveyed in a despatch from General Roberts, dated 8th* (21th) December, that 16 mule-loads of bread had reached Lataband without opposition, gave the English real consolation.

On the 11th (23rd) December, Colonel Norman's detachment at Jagdalak was attacked by Ghilzais, said to number 3,000 men, who were driven off.

General Gough was still moving on, though slowly, and he effected a junction with General Roberts's force at Kábul on the 12th (24th) December, and on this date the garrison of Sherpur was very happily extricated from a critical situation.

But the people in rear of General Gough's brigade were not keeping quiet, for, on the very date of his arrival at Kábul, the Ghilzais attacked the English detachment on the Jagdalak Kotal and were repulsed, Major Tucker being wounded and a private killed on the occasion.

From this condensed outline of the operations of the different portions of General Bright's division, operations on which the safety of General Roberts's force depended, and on the fighting capacity of which the English so reckoned, we see that it was not on a war footing, as it should have been, for it was not only without transport, which alone could enable it to move with rapidity to any threatened point, but it was not even furnished with a sufficient quantity of provisions.

In order to supplement our description of the operations of the Peshawar column between the 2nd and 12th (14th and 24th) December, we must observe that when telegraphic communication with Kábul had been interrupted, the English used the heliograph with great success. Still, during the period of the Sherpur investment, there were several cloudy days, and since the Morse pattern of heliograph can only be used

* We know that this date was, for the English, one of the most anxious during the whole of the campaign, as no one could say how the direct attack undertaken by Muhammad-Ján in consequence of the flight of the English into Sherpur, would end.—*Author.*

in sun-light, General Roberts was at times completely deprived of all means of communication. Under such circumstances, an instrument of the French pattern would be very useful, as it can be worked in cloudy weather and also at night.

Attitude of the tribes along the Khaibar line.

Before they moved their troops, a real question for the English was, what would be the attitude of the tribes of the Khaibar and of the Momands towards them?

The inhabitants of the Khaibar mountains had been completely ruined by the late war; a considerable number of their dwelling-places had been thrown down or burnt by detachments of Anglo-Indian troops, who had often visited their villages during the frequent mountain expeditions.

One of the letters sent from Calcutta says on this subject that it would be difficult to bribe the Ghilzais to remain quiet, as the Afridis had been bribed, and the latter *had been very skilfully bought;* but even could the Momands be thus bought, it would be difficult to reckon on their line of conduct afterwards.

The English were very desirous of securing either the services or the neutrality of certain popular leaders, who would not, however, be bought over. We have already named Muhammad-Ján, and with him we shall meet again. Asmat-Ullah, too, is deserving of special attention. He was dissatisfied and had a grievance because the English, in disregard of his former services, had deserted him as soon as they thought him of no further use, and then they had again entered into formal negotiations with him.

Towards the close of October there were disturbances along the Khaibar line. The character of these disturbances has not been thoroughly explained to us, and the English papers are scrupulously silent about them. On the 21st October (2nd November) there appeared in the *Standard* a statement to the effect that "there are certain indications that in the Khaibar order has been established." In a report sent from Lahore to the *Daily News* dated the 2nd (14th) November, it was mentioned that news had been received from Gandamak that Muhammad-Ján, at the head of fresh forces, was threatening the Khaibar pass.

From this fact, as testified to by eye-witnesses, we cannot but come to the conclusion that the English posts along a most important line of communications were very badly furnished with supplies.

The English could in no way succeed in securing order on the entire line of communications between Kábul and Peshawar. In the Khaibar pass, thanks to the large subsidies paid to the Afridis, the position of affairs was very bearable, but, in the portion of the line between Jalálábád and Jagdalak, the local population made constant raids. Such a

circumstance could not but have a very unfavourable influence on the general position of affairs in Northern Afghánistán, and especially on the posts all along the line. The troops received almost all their supplies from Pesháwar, for the garrison of Jalálábád alone benefited from the proximity of the rich province of Basud. In order to facilitate the receipt of supplies from this province, a bridge was thrown over the Kabul river near Jalálábád.

The inhabitants of the country saw plainly the anxiety and confusion that reigned amongst the several details of this column, and took advantage of them accordingly. In order to furnish General Gough's brigade with food, some hastily-collected transport was moved forward under escort of 500 men and two guns commanded by Colonel Norman. On the march to the Peizrán-Kotal, Colonel Norman had to make his way through bodies of Afgháns who had occupied the surrounding heights; and to scatter them, he had to bring his guns into play. At the Peizrán-Kotal a very lively skirmish took place. Major Tucker, wishing to clear the road of Ghilzais, took possession of some low hills opposite the Kotal, but he was driven from them by a strong body of Ghilzais. From the Peizrán-Kotal to Jagdalak, which Colonel Norman reached on the 7th (19th) December, the detachment was the whole way harassed by armed Ghilzais, and would, in all probability, have been destroyed if a flying column under Major Roberts had not been sent to meet it from Jagdalak.

We have said that in front of General Gough's brigade the people had resolved to show opposition to the English with arms in their hands, and, as we have seen, they had already made several attacks even on the line of communications between Jagdalak and Jalálábád. These were the Ghilzais. Now it was of the greatest importance to the English that order should be preserved among the powerful Momand tribe. The Momands, who were devoted to Yakúb-Khán, remained quiet so long as their favourite (Yakúb-Khán's mother is of their tribe) was Amir, but the moment he was sent as a prisoner to India, this powerful Afghán tribe began to prepare for open war with the destroyers of their *Suzerain's* rights.

State of the Pesháwar line of communications.

Of the march of the several portions of this column to the relief of the Sherpur garrison we have only very scanty and withal very conflicting information. In spite of the energy which the commanders of this relieving force might display, assistance could not be afforded by it at the time at which it was most needed. In fact, all the energy of the several commanders seemed of no effect in the face of the truly pitiable condition in which the troops along the line between Jamrud and Kábul were situated. Complete destitution as regards transport, insufficiency of provisions, and other causes placed the troops of the Pesháwar column

in a strictly defensive attitude. We should bear in mind that from Jagdalak, through the Lataband pass, to Kábul is about 40 miles, and that from Jalálábád to Jagdalak 51 miles. There is no reason to doubt but that, had the several posts at Jagdalak, Gandamak, and Jalálábád been able to advance, General Roberts would have received his first reinforcement on the third or fourth day, whereas it did not reach him till the tenth.

Of course this very much depended on the generals in command, who did not display the proper amount of decision on the occasion.

The *Times*, in one of its leading articles, expressed its dissatisfaction at the terrible condition of the transport train of the Pesháwar column.

[Here is given an extract from the article in question.]

[Text resumed.]

The first intelligence we have of the march of the Pesháwar column towards Kábul is contained in a Reuter's telegram, dated Calcutta, 3rd (15th) December, in which we are told that "General Gough at Gandamak and General Arbuthnot at Jalálábád have received orders to advance on Kábul. Communication is not interrupted, but there is fear that agitation will spread amongst the tribes."

[General Soboleff, after quoting, from various English sources, the reasons for the slow rate of progress of the Pesháwar column towards Kábul, thus writes.]

[Text resumed.]

The news that General Gough, who had troops that were considered of sufficient numerical strength for an advance on Kábul, was acting on the defensive, produced a depressing effect in military circles in India. Further reinforcements were at once sent from Pesháwar to Dakka, Jalálábád, and the posts ahead. Complete panic had seized the English, and therefore it was difficult to expect order. Telegraphic communication was interrupted near Jagdalak, and so the heliograph had to be utilised. One of the stations of this useful instrument was established on the Lataband pass (8,000), and from it both Kábul and the Jalálábád plain are visible.

[General Soboleff here quotes various telegrams in support of his allegation regarding the confused nature of the statements made as to the military preparedness of the Pesháwar column.]

[Text resumed.]

We cannot but invite the serious attention of our readers to the helpless condition of the Pesháwar column and to the thorough chaos in the Commissariat Department. This circumstance very clearly depicts the character of the military administration in India. In any case, the

fact must be noted in examining the question as to the relative military strength of the several powers of Asia.

[After giving two more extracts in support of his charges, General Soboleff goes on.]

[Text resumed.]

Thus in the Pesháwar column there was really a condition of absolute disorder, and all that the Staff of the Indian army had written, as to the state of the Pesháwar column at any rate, and of its supplies, was not worth the paper on which it was recorded.

General Bright on the 6th (18th) December reported to the Viceroy that, according to intelligence which he had received from Gandamak, all was going on well there, and that, in case General Gough's brigade might not be able to push on, he himself intended, as soon as all the arrangements for securing the road to Pesháwar were completed, to advance with his division, numbering 8,000 men, towards Kábul.

This report may be reckoned amongst the number of those which were quite meaningless, being sent only to quiet, and to a certain extent console, the English public, and also to show the natives of India that the troops of the Pesháwar column constituted a veritable fighting force. We have seen, however, how effectually this same force was chained to the places whereat it was posted.

Having received, with the greatest difficulty, the necessary reinforcement, General Gough had now, at Jagdalak, a brigade numbering 3,718 men;* of these 1,242 were Europeans, and 12 guns.

General Gough at length decided to leave Jagdalak, and, in order to secure his line of communications, he left at Peizrán 800 men, at the Jagdalak-Kotal 300 men, and at Fort Jagdalak 700 men.

On the 11th (23rd) December 1879, General Roberts's force was relieved of the presence of the Afghán levies. On the 12th (24th) December, the advance portions of the Pesháwar column reached Kábul somehow or another. The line of communications by Kábul, Gandamak, Jalálábád, and the Khaibar had been attacked by Ghilzais and other Afghán tribes. An Afghán levy, led by the brave Muhammad-Ján, had only left the neighbourhood of Kábul in order to collect fresh forces for the repetition of the attack. The population was in an extremely excited state, whilst the English troops were harassed by incredible difficulties. In English circles in India there was great alarm, and the English Government itself had at length come to the knowledge that to fight with Afgháns was not so easy as it had supposed. We have seen that Brigadier-General Gough reached Kábul on the 12th (24th) December, the day after Muhammad-Ján's levies had withdrawn from the neighbourhood,

* General Soboleff gives the details.—*Trans.*

and when, in fact, any help from the Pesháwar column was no longer needed.

The Commissariat Department in Afghánistán.

In the description of the movements of General Gough's column, we notice facts which give grounds for the doubt that we have expressed, and we may further remark that a careful study of the events of both periods of the campaign lead us to the knowledge that the military organisation of the Indian army, and especially of its Commissariat Department, are far from being distinguished for those high qualities which alone could guarantee the English any solid military success.

State of the Medical Department on the Pesháwar line of communications.

The pitiable condition of the Medical Department on the Pesháwar line of communications, which was brought to light only through the casual communication of a correspondent, excited just displeasure amongst the English, and appeals were made in the Anglo-Indian papers for the exercise of private charity to remedy the evils that had been exposed.

After accomplishing its task of opening up communication with Kábul, Major-General Bright's column went into winter quarters, but as its details had been dispersed over the line of communications, its designation had to be changed: it thus became the *2nd Division of the Kábul Field Force*, and it was placed under the orders of General Roberts, who received the rank of Lieutenant-General and the title of *Commanding in Eastern Afghánistán*, with authority that extended from Kábul to Jamrud.

Relying as we are solely on English sources of information, we cannot gainsay the fact that on General Bright's Division a proper amount of attention was not bestowed by the Head-Quarter Staff of the Indian army, and we cannot omit to note one feature which we have met with in Englishmen with surprise, and it is *their extreme carelessness*. It may be that this fault arises from their excessive *self-confidence*.

One of these two issues was involved: either thorough incompetence on the part of the military chiefs, or disorganisation bordering on demoralisation, 12,000 men and 30 guns, furnished, according to the Viceroy's statement, with two months' provisions, could not effect that which troops should always be able to do, on whom has been laid one of the most sacred and at the same time one of the most important of military obligations, *viz., the relief of their own comrades*. We see that General Roberts, who, after several serious defeats inflicted on him by the Afgháns, had, on the 2nd (14th) December, shut himself up in Sherpur, received his first and only succour, consisting of but 1,500 men, on the 12th (24th) of the same month, *i.e.*, after the lapse of *10 days*.

Official telegrams inform us that the sanitary condition of General Bright's Division was excellent. We positively refuse to believe this

assertion. We do not know what steps were taken by the several commanders to provide against a severe winter, but we imagine that, where troops are not even furnished with sufficient supplies, they are not likely to be provided with warm clothing, and so their health could scarcely be in that splendid condition in which it was represented to be, more especially when we bear in mind that Native soldiers do not readily withstand the effects of a rigorous climate.

We have seen that the state of the Pesháwar column cannot be called brilliant.

The complete disorganisation of the Transport Department, the more than defective condition of the Medical Department, the insufficiency of provisions and of other first essentials of an army, the dread of the local population, the system of bribes, &c., all these are evident signs of the bad condition of the Pesháwar column, and afford but another indication that there is still much to be done if the question of the military power of the English in India is to be solved in a way that shall be favourable to themselves. In the present campaign, which was occasioned by a gross insult hurled by a weak Asiatic people in the face of the entire English nation, the Indian Government, wishing to wipe out this insult by the sword, and fearing for its prestige throughout the continent of India, put forth all its moral and material strength and sent a powerful army into Afghánistán; but, nevertheless, it was unable, even after the capture of the capital of the Afgháns, to instil in the minds of a weak people the feeling either of dread or of respect.

Although Muhammad-Ján had moved off to the south-west of Kábul, and the Kohistánis had retired towards the north, and the English had apparently successfully emerged from the struggle, the population along the line of communications, from Kábul to Jalálábád and Jamrud, had not only not quieted down but were more and more disposed to be hostile to the English. At the head of these hostile bands was the energetic Asmat-Ullah, who was making every endeavour to get possession of the fort of Jagdalak and to cut off all communication between Kábul and Jalálábád.

The English energetically busied themselves about the re-erection of the broken telegraph line, and so by the 29th December (10th January) communication with Pesháwar was re-established. Subsequently, however, the wires were again cut in many places, and news was not received from Calcutta for several days. Communication was once more opened, but on the 20th January (1st February), the wire was again cut at Dakka. In a few days it was restored.

We have no precise information regarding the organisation of the telegraph service of the Anglo-Indian Army of Operation, but we can state that this service was carried on remarkably well under the most unfavourable circumstances.

The Pesháwar column, from January to April, maintained a passive attitude; indeed, during the greater portion of that period it may be said to have been on the defensive. With the exception of an expedition into the Lughmán Valley, which was very successfully carried out, although it had no positive results, nothing occurred to enliven the weary halt of this column.

In the middle of March, news was received of preparations for an attack on the British posts between Kábul and Gandamak. In consequence of this these posts were strengthened and supplies stored for a period that would last till the 18th (30th) March.*

The calculations made, at the beginning of General Bright's *reconnaisance* of the Lughmán Valley, that the natives would bring provisions into the English camp, proved to be incorrect. General Bright's detachment, which was without sufficient transport, met, at starting, with considerable difficulty in supplying itself with the necessary provisions.

Unfortunately, the English correspondents from Afghánistán and from India do not tell us much about this expedition of General Bright's to the Lughmán Valley, and it is, therefore, difficult to determine its real importance amongst the other military operations that were being carried on in Northern Afghánistán. Apparently, however, it must be included amongst the number of those which ended in failure, since it did not result in the submission of Usmat-Ullah and of his chief companions in arms, nor did it bring about complete order along the line of communications on the side of the Lughmán valley. Nevertheless, the English were satisfied with General Bright's operations, and we find in a communication received from Jalálábád in the beginning of April, that Asaf-Khán, the Governor of Lughmán, had collected all his headmen, who had agreed to assist him in maintaining order in the valley; that such was the peaceful attitude of the population, always hostile even to the Amirs of Afghánistán, that General Bright's policy must be admitted to be skilful, whilst especial acknowledgment must be accorded to the experience and tact of Captain Warburton, the Political Agent with the Pesháwar column.

But from a further description of the operations of the English troops quartered in the valley of the Kábul river, between Jagdalak and the Khaibar Pass, we shall see that the Ghilzais of the Lughmán valley had not at all abandoned their hostile line of action against the enemies of their native land.

This circumstance prevented General Bright from fully carrying out the object set before him. His detachment remained for about half of February in the Lughmán valley in the same indefinite position. Although about 50 influential natives had appeared in the English camp,

* Telegram from Kábul, dated 16th (28th) April.—*Author.*

Asmat-Ullah and four others, who were the chief leaders of the people, would not listen to any proposals for peace. Meanwhile, there came the news from Jalálábád that the Shinwáris and a portion of the Momands had again assumed a threatening attitude. This news was unfavourable in the highest degree, as, at this very time, a large number of baggage animals were on the move between Pesháwar and Jalálábád.

Towards the end of March 1880, the population in the neighbourhood of Kábul was disturbed by various alarming rumours which came from the other side of the Hindu-Kush, where Abdul-Rahmán had firmly consolidated his power. The English did not yet know whether this famous Barakzai was disposed to enter into an agreement with them, or whether he would appear as a fresh representative of the powerful popular party that was opposed to them.

Let us now turn our attention to the circumstances through which it became known how this Sirdár had quitted Russian territory in order to take an active part in the Anglo-Afghán struggle.

The Afghán leaders awaited the termination of the negotiations between the English and Abdul-Rahmán, and they, therefore, did not engage in military operations on an extensive scale. Nevertheless, small bodies of Afgháns had skirmishes with the English troops.*

[The next three pages General Soboleff devotes to narrating the locality and character of the several skirmishes.]

12.—The Kuram and Pesháwar Lines of Operation towards Kábul, northwards towards the Amu-Daria, and westwards towards Ghazni and Kandahar.

The lines of operations of the Kuram and Pesháwar led to Kábul, whence there are two main routes: one to the north, across the Hindu-Kush, to the valley of the Amu-Daria, the other to the south-west, to Ghazni and Kandahar.

Although the first of these comes out into the valley of the Amu-Daria, the principal river of Central Asia, it has *en route* to cross the highest mountain range in this part of Asia, and in a topographical sense cannot be regarded as a practicable route for the advance of armed forces however considerable. A body of troops having crossed over from the Kábul valley to that of the Amu-Daria, might, even in the face of slight obstacles, easily find itself in a dangerous position, but should the obstacles prove of a more formidable kind, the same force would be cut off from its line of communications and be destroyed. It should be observed that such a body would, for seven or even eight months, be altogether disconnected with Kábul, for, during the winter months, the passes of the

* Any inhabitants of the country found with arms in their hands were in their turn attacked by the English detachments sent to collect the taxes.—*Author.*

Hindu-Kush are blocked with snow and almost all communication over them comes to an end. Thus from the side of the Hindu-Kush the advance of an enemy cannot constitute a serious danger.

13.—Operations of the Southern Column under the command of Lieutenant-General Donald Stewart.

During the entire period of the autumn and winter of 1878, the operations of this column partook of the character of those of a moveable field force (*colonne d'avance*).

If the reader will take a glance at the map of Southern Asia, he will see that the direction of the line of operations of the Southern column of the Anglo-Indian army has an extraordinarily important strategical significance, incomparably greater than that of either the Peshawar or Kuram columns. The line from the lower Indus to Kandahar and onwards to Herát is incontestably of the greatest strategical importance.

Shikarpur served as the base of the Southern Column. Close to this town, *viz.*, at Sukkur, the English constructed a temporary bridge across the Indus.

The line of operations of the same column extended towards Quetta and on to Kandahar. From Shikarpur to Quetta the distance is 208⅔ miles; of these 90 miles lie through the Bolán Pass. From Quetta to Kandahar the distance is 147⅓ miles. Consequently the length of the line of operations under General Stewart covered, towards the close of August 1879, a distance of 356 miles.

Although this route does not present throughout insurmountable obstacles, there are over portions of it considerable difficulties. In the first place, it crosses a low-lying waste which, during the rainy and flood seasons, is inundated, from Dádur it leads for a distance of 90 miles through the Bolán Pass, wherein are met with considerable obstacles to transport, especially if that be camel. Beyond this the route crosses the Khojak, Gwai, and other passes, which lie at a height of more than 7,000 feet above the level of the sea. Beyond these passes begins a road that is fit for the passage of all three arms of the service.

Kandahar served as an intermediate base for General Stewart in the operations entrusted to him in the direction of Herát or Ghazni: and the problem he had to solve was the storage on this base of all kinds of provisions necessary for an entire division for at least half a year. The solution of such a question, with the kind of transport placed at General Stewart's disposal, could not be fulfilled. It was therefore decided to begin the construction of *a railroad from the Indus towards Kandahar.*

In Lord Lytton's despatch showing what forces were available to take part in a fresh campaign, no mention whatever is made of the Southern Column, and this fact is very intelligible, because, when the despatch was

written, the said column was so weak numerically that it could be hardly said to exist. It was, moreover, far removed from its base and cut off from all reinforcements. The question, therefore, of its rapid advance could not be taken into the consideration of the primary strategical dispositions.

We know, however, from private accounts that General Stewart was ordered to hold on to Kandahar and to recall all troops which were on the march from Southern Afghánistán.

The character of the military operations of the Southern Column, to be carried out under Lieutenant-General Stewart, now received the serious and full attention of the Head-Quarter Staff of the Indian army.

On the day of the massacre of the members of the Cavagnari Mission at Kábul, the rear-guard of the Southern Column, of a strength of 2,000 men, was to evacuate Kandahar and to retire into the Pishin valley which had been ceded to the English by the Treaty of Gandamak. The retirement had begun, but the opening of a fresh campaign put a stop to it. Lieutenant-General Stewart received orders to hold on to Kandahar and to recall all the troops which had left it. Accordingly, a brigade under General Hughes soon re-occupied the city. A detachment, which could furnish a considerable reinforcement to the Kandahar garrison, was stationed in the Pishin valley, whilst the following troops—2nd Biluchis, 2nd Panjáb Cavalry, and one battery of artillery—were posted at Chaman,* near the Khojak Pass.

The Head-Quarter Staff of the Indian army calculated that, by the 29th August (10th September), 4,000 men could be concentrated at Kandahar, and that a portion of these could be immediately moved towards Khelát-i-Ghilzai.

Of the preparatory operations of this column we know very little. In the scantiness of information regarding them many were inclined to see a simple indifference to events which had not so lively an interest as was excited by the operations of General Roberts's force, but we cannot accept this view. It seems to us that the Head-Quarter Staff of the Indian army took especial care to screen, as far as possible, the real character of the operations of the Southern Column. In the preceding chapter we have seen that the main object of this column consisted in a campaign against Herát, and the authorities in India imagined that six months would suffice to prepare everything that would be required for the attainment of this object.

As soon as the fresh campaign opened, the Governor of Bombay was requested to organise a transport-train and to collect supplies for General Stewart's column. The Governor accordingly adopted energetic measures to carry out this request and made every arrangement on his part,

* See *Map of Afghánistán*, compiled from all available sources in the Quarter-Master-General's Office, Simla, 1871.—*Author.*

so that the provinces under his administration should furnish the Commissariat Department with the largest possible number of mules, horses, ponies, and camels required for the transport-train of the Southern Column. In the campaign of 1878-79 camels constituted the chief and, indeed, almost the sole means of transport, but, for the purposes of the campaign that was about to open, camels had to be looked for far and wide. Arrangements were also made in Bombay for a considerable supply of two-wheeled carts. This transport and war stores of every kind were shipped in large quantities on board vessels in Bombay and despatched to Karáchi,* whence they were conveyed by rail to Haidarábád and then by boats to Sukkur on the Indus. From here everything had to be carried along the road leading through the Bolan Páss to Kandahar.

The harvest of 1879 was a very good one throughout Southern Afghánístán. A communication, dated Simla, 10th (22nd) September, reached London to the effect that, on account of the abundant harvest in Southern Afghánístán, it would only be necessary to transport from India for the use of the troops a small quantity of grain. The harvest was, indeed, so plentiful that not only were the people about Kandahar able to furnish the English with an abundance of supplies, but offers of such came in from Khelát-i-Ghilzai and other distant points. These favourable circumstances permitted the English to reduce the size of their transport-train and enabled them to considerably lessen the drain on the store-depôts along the base extending to Kandahar.

Whilst the Governor of Bombay was completing all his projected measures, the Indian Government urged General Stewart to undertake some kind of military expedition in order to indicate the presence of British troops in Southern Afghánístán. From a communication dated Simla, 6th (18th) September, we know that, *in spite of the Amir's protest*, the Indian Government directed General Stewart to send a detachment to Ghazni "for the preservation of order there;" but the carrying out of such an order was not so easy as the authorities in India imagined. General Stewart, therefore, determined to confine all his operations until the spring to the occupation of the fort of Khelát-i-Ghilzai, and for this purpose he ordered General Hughes to move from Kandahar with a detachment, consisting of three infantry regiments, one cavalry, and five guns.

Tahir-Khán, the Governor of Khelát-i-Ghilzai, on hearing of the march of these troops, sent a letter to Colonel St. John, Political Agent at Kandahar, in which he expressed his satisfaction at the near approach of British troops and promised to furnish them with the necessary supplies.

* See letter from Simla to the *Times*, dated 21st October (2nd November) 1879.—*Author.*

General Hughes' detachment reached Khelát-i-Ghilzai safely on the 17th (29th) September. Provisions appeared to be plentiful all along the road. The country was quiet and the attitude of the inhabitants towards the English troops was friendly. Caravans passed between Khelát-i-Ghilzai and Kandahar without hindrance. The Governor gave up the citadel to the English troops and they speedily settled down in the houses vacated by the local militia.

After leaving two companies of the 59th Foot, four companies of the 2nd Beluchis, one squadron of Cavalry, and two guns at Khelát-i-Ghilzai, General Hughes moved on with the rest of his detachment. But when he had advanced 14 miles, *i.e.*, one march, he halted, "owing to there being a dearth of supplies in his front," so said Reuter's telegram.

By the occupation of Khelát-i-Ghilzai, Kandahar was secured on the side of Ghazni, where, as circumstances soon showed, would be centred all the organised opposition to the English, and where an Afghán army was being formed, at the head of which would be the two talented leaders, General Muhammad-Ján and the Mullah Mushk-i-Alam.

To have carried out further movements would have been imprudent, and therefore General Stewart resolved to remain quietly where he was during the autumn and winter, without undertaking any kind of expedition, and to prepare for solid success during a spring campaign. This decision was in complete accord with the general position of affairs. General Stewart had not sufficient transport or troops to enable him to move those he had from the points which he already occupied without risk, and his reserves had not yet reached him.

He decided, after having occupied Khelát-i-Ghilzai as an advanced post, to gradually stock Kandahar with provisions, to improve the roads on his line of communications, and to concentrate his forces. To these points all the energy of General Stewart's column was confined during the autumn and winter, and during that period nothing special occurred which could interfere with these *preparatory* operations.

Meanwhile, the excitement which had taken hold of the Kábul and Ghazni districts, had passed, though in a subdued form, to Southern Afghánistán. The sole military event, which can be described as a military operation, in this part of Afghánistán, was the Shajui affair. On the 12th (24th) October, General Hughes's detachment had an encounter with the Afgháns at Shajui, near Khelát-i-Ghilzai. In the Viceroy's official despatch this skirmish is thus described.

[Here follows the quotation from the official document indicated.]

This affair quieted once for all the whole of Southern Afghánistán, and enabled General Stewart to devote his entire attention to the preparations for a spring campaign. To this end his exertions were above all directed towards the construction of a transport-train. General Stewart, who had had, in the course of the first phase of the campaign, the widest experience

of camel transport, and who was, therefore, aware of the complete impossibility of basing any ideas of future success exclusively on this kind of carriage, pressed upon the Indian Government the necessity of connecting Kandahar with the general railway-system of British India. His proposals met with the full concurrence of the authorities in India, and the construction of the proposed extension was therefore decided on. The work was pushed forward with great energy. Sir Richard Temple took the construction under his own supervision, and the extracts from the English papers show us with what unusual rapidity the work was carried out.

In its own place we will endeavour to examine, from a strategical point of view, the important question of the extension of the net-work of Indian railways in the direction of Afghánistán; here we will confine ourselves to a few remarks regarding *the Kandahar Railway*. This railway was begun in September 1879, and by the end of October 20 miles had been laid; the rate of construction was *one mile per diem*. As far as Dádar; *i.e.*, to the mouth of the Bolán Pass, it was decided to make a *broad-gauge* line (5½ feet), and beyond that point to employ a gauge of 3·02 feet.

Sir Richard Temple, after going over the road between Shikarpur and Kandahar, proposed that the line of railway should be taken through the Bolán Pass. As the southern terminus of this railway he chose Rohri near Sukkur, and he recommended that the line should go to Sibi, Gurnai, Chenij and Gival. This project was approved, and the work was pushed on, its success being amazing. A Calcutta telegram to the *Times*, dated 6th (18th) January 1880, mentioned that the first passenger train had arrived that day at Sibi, and that the average rate of construction of the line equalled 1⅓ miles per diem, "*a fact, in the opinion of the English papers, without any precedent in the history of the construction of railways.*" By the beginning of February, trains ran from the Indus for a distance of 140 miles. The line was divided into three sections—Jacobábád, Gurnai, and Gulistán-Karéz.

The completion of this portion of the Kandahar railway, by shortening the line of communication of the Southern Column by more than 133 miles, must be considered as a very important strategical success for the English in the Afghán theatre of war. Their operations in Southern Afghánistán now rested on a solid base, and consequently military success would bring about very durable results. But to this general valuation of General Stewart, we consider it necessary to add that he has displayed the qualities of a very talented general, and has understood that ultimate military success is not attained by chance military triumphs only, of whatever kind they may be, but chiefly after careful preparation.

We do not know exactly what was the strength of the Southern

Column, for English newspapers very seldom make any mention of its composition. But, judging by the letters of correspondents, there could not have been at Khelát-i-Ghilzai and at Kandahar, when the campaign re-opened, more than 4,000 men. An official memorandum published in Calcutta, towards the end of December 1879, maintains that General Stewart had under his command at Kandahar 9,000 men and 62 guns. We imagine, however, that these figures are to be taken to include the strength of the whole of the Southern Column, for, in a letter dated London, 11th (23rd) December, we meet with the following.

[Here follows an extract in support of the author's calculations as to the strength of the Kandahar Column].

The troops of the Southern Column were, therefore, few in number, and most of them were in rear engaged in the construction of the line of communications.

We know very little regarding the composition of these troops during the autumn and winter portion of the campaign, and we suppose that the meagre details regarding them and the absence of nearly all information on the subject in the official despatches had for its object the concealment of the real state of affairs.

We shall see that the English seriously counted on moving a strong force towards Herát in the spring, and made every preparation accordingly. For the success of such an expedition, which would of course be of vast political importance, complete secrecy would be indispensable. We shall see how all these calculations were upset and how pretensious plans of conquest became reduced to an ordinary expedition to Ghazni, with the object of destroying Muhammad-Ján's army.

In order to amplify our scanty information regarding the operations of the Southern Column, we will make a few remarks regarding the sanitary condition of the troops of this column. Eye-witnesses unite in testifying that, during the autumn of 1879, the health of General Stewart's force was excellent. Thus on the 10th (22nd) November, in the 60th Foot at Kandahar, strength 700 rank and file, there were only 13 sick, and on the 1st (13th) December, there were only 9 men in hospital. This highly favourable condition of the troops of the Southern Column is easily explained, *firstly*, by the fact that they enjoyed rest and proper quarters; and, *secondly*, by favourable climatic conditions. The close of the summer, the entire autumn, and part of the winter, had been marked by an absence of rain, and, during the autumn nights, there had been some slight frosts. Just before Christmas some light rain had fallen, and in the middle of January heavy rain fell at Kandahar. From a letter dated Kandahar, 26th January (7th February), we learn that on the 19th (31st), 20th, and 21st January (1st and 2nd February) snow fell, and cold and

frosts set in "such as have never been known here before." On the 26th of the same month (January) [7th February N. S.], heavy rain fell. In the middle of February heavy snow fell throughout Southern Afghánistán, and at Quetta and the Khojak Pass it was so deep that the movement of troops and of transport was quite stopped. At Khelát-i-Ghilzai, too, and along the road to Kandahar, snow lay so deep that neither troops nor transport could get along.

A severe though brief winter, which began in the middle of February, developed sickness amongst the troops in Southern Afghánistán, and from a letter dated Kandahar, 23rd February (6th March), we learn that a large convoy of sick soldiers, under the command of Major Gourley,* left Kandahar for India. The principal cause of sickness was inflammation of the lungs, and this chiefly amongst sepoys. In the beginning of March beautiful spring weather set in at Kandahar. At Khelát-i-Ghilzai, which is somewhat higher than Kandahar, the spring began a week later.

As regards the state of the Commissariat Department of the Southern Column, and especially the transport branch of it, we have scarcely any information, since the English papers are silent on the subject. As we have already mentioned, a considerable number of sheep-skin coats were bought in Persia for the English troops serving in Afghánistán. In the English papers it was stated that at every stage between Kandahar and Khelát-i-Ghilzai provisions were stored. The above include all our information regarding the Intendance Department of the Southern Column up to March 1880. In all probability General Stewart rested all his hopes on the railway which, on reaching Sibi, shortened his line of communications by more than 130 miles and greatly facilitated active operations.

The Southern Column of the Anglo-Indian Army of Operation, with its advanced posts at Khelát-i-Ghilzai and Kandahar, was scattered over the whole line of communications to the very banks of the Indus. Its numerical strength was so limited that no idea could be entertained of its advance. The entire force that Lieutenant-General Stewart could put forward with aggressive objects did not exceed 3,000 men. With such a small detachment not only was it impossible to think of a movement towards Herát, but an advance as far as Girishk would have been dangerous.

In view of the bitter experience of the campaign of 1878-79, General Stewart did not even entertain the thought of military operations, but quietly remained at the places which he had occupied.

At the same time to adhere to a passive attitude was not possible.

* English names become as mutilated in Russian letters as Russian do in English, so that I am not sure whether this officer's name has been correctly transcribed.—W. E. G.

On the one hand, the chronic disorders which were rampant in the Herát province, under the Governorship of Ayub-Khán, Yakúb-Khán's brother, might, under certain circumstances, cease, and then a detachment of Herát troops could easily make a diversion towards Kandahar and place General Stewart's force in a difficult position. On the other hand, the province of Ghazni was in the most intensely excited state, and although Muhammad-Ján was compelled to adopt hostile action against the Hazáras, the Afghán forces in this quarter were very much excited, and therefore it was very possible that under the energetic Wardak chief fresh attacks on Kábul might be expected from this direction. At last there appeared on the scene of Afghán rivalship a person who at once upset all the schemes of the English Government and placed the Afghán question on a fresh footing. We speak of the famous Afghán Sirdár, Abdul-Rahmán-Khán, who, in November 1879, left Russian territory with the intention of fighting for the throne of his ancestors.

And so the object of the operations of the Southern Column was definitely fixed. For the attainment of this object, it was necessary to carry out a considerable reinforcement of the forces of this column. As we are aware, the Southern Column consisted of troops of the Bengal army which is reckoned the best in India. But as the Bengal army had sent to the Afghán theatre of war all that it had to give, the Head-Quarter-Staff decided to strengthen General Stewart's column with troops from the Bombay Presidency. It was thus contemplated to free the Bengal Division from garrison duties and to make it available for service in a campaign.

Towards the close of December 1879, orders were given to begin in the southern theatre of war the gradual relief of Bengal by Bombay troops.

The first intimation we have of this change is from a telegram in the *Daily News*, which appeared at the end of December of the year quoted. In this it was stated that a Bombay brigade was marching to the Bolán Pass to relieve the Bengal troops ordered to Kandahar. The above movement implied (so ran the telegram in question) the expectation of an energetic attack from the Herát quarter, where, according to information received by the English, a strong Afghán army was being organised. The telegram added, "it is supposed that Abdul-Rahmán-Khán, a fugitive from Russian territory, will appear at the head of the movement from Herát."

The *Times* communicated to us the following gradual movement of the troops: first of all two regiments of Native Infantry were sent off, behind these came the Panjáb Cavalry, then two batteries of British Infantry and two batteries of Artillery. Besides these details others were moving up thus: from Bombay to Karáchi by ship, from Karáchi

to Haidarábád by rail, then by boat on the Indus to Sukkur, from Sukkur to Sibi by the newly-constructed railway.

In the beginning of February 1880, trains of the Kandahar Railway ran for a distance of 140 miles. English newspapers testify to the vast benefit conferred by this railway in the concentration of troops at the front, and especially in the transport of Commissariat and other *impedimenta*. The Kandahar Railway is, indeed, the first example on a large scale in Asiatic warfare, wherein a railway has appeared as a necessary adjunct to those chief military resources by the aid of which the object of a war is attained.

It was then decided to despatch Lieutenant-General Stewart's Bengal troops, which were concentrated at Kandahar and Pishin, to Ghazni, and to send to meet them there a strong body of Kábul levies.

By the middle of March, all the preparations for the advance of General Stewart's force had been completed.

It was proposed that the advance on Khelát-i-Ghilzai should be carried out along the valleys of the two rivers Argazán and Tarnak.

[Here follow particulars as to the strength and line of advance of the two portions of General Stewart's column.]

[Text resumed.]

The 17th (29th), 18th (30th), and 19th (31st) March were the dates that had been fixed for the march of the Southern Column from Kandahar.

The troops were contented, as they had been told that the march was nothing else than a return to India by another route. A long halt at various points in Southern Afghánistán, almost without any fighting, had wearied the troops of General Stewart's column to such a degree that they openly expressed their wish either to return to their respective quarters in India or to march towards Herát, Ghazni, or to any other point of the enemy's country. The troops had been especially pleased, therefore, at Lord Cranbrook's announcement in the House of Lords, some days prior to the march, that General Stewart would soon begin to retire towards India *viâ* Ghazni.

The road along which it was proposed that the Southern Column should march from Kandahar towards Ghazni, is well known to the English, through their experiences of the campaign of 1839-1842; a portion of this route, *viz.*, as far as Khelát-i-Ghilzai and the two following marches, had been under their own rule for the previous seven months, and it was consequently in a very satisfactory condition. The route along the Argazán valley had likewise been previously reconnoitred, and the greater portion of it was also known.

The detail of the route from Kandahar to Ghazni is as follows:

	No. of Miles.	No. of Marches.
Muhammad-Kala	10	1
Kala-Akhun	15⅓	1
Shahr-i-Sáfi	14	1
Jandak	28	2
Khelát-i-Ghilzai fort	13⅓	1
Mamin-Kala	44	3
Gulján	14	1
Mukkur	12	1
Jargati	42	3
Ghazni	18	1
TOTAL	210⅔*	15

The Southern Column left Kandahar as had been proposed; the date of departure of General Stewart and of his staff being the 18th (30th) March.

On the 18th (30th) March the Bengal troops began their march from Kandahar, moving in three *échelons* along the road to Khelát-i-Ghilzai and onwards to Ghazni and Kábul. General Stewart had under his command 6,000 men, so that when this force moved from Southern Afghánistán, the English considerably weakened the defence of this part of the Afghán theatre of war. The protection of Kandahar and the line of communications with India was entrusted to Bombay troops, and these in respect of fighting power are greatly below those of the Bengal Presidency.

Under such circumstances, it would have been very useful to have moved a portion of the Kuram Field Force towards the Shutur-Gardan, and so to have to a certain extent covered the right flank of General Stewart's column.

At such a time, some display of activity on the part of the Kuram force would have been extremely useful, but we know that that force was destined to adhere to a passive attitude.

The Kuram force brought no aid whatever either to General Stewart's column or to General Roberts's force at Kábul, but uselessly wasted its strength in fighting with the local inhabitants.

It was intended that General Hughes should open out direct communications with the Kuram force across the Shutur-Gardan, but this plan fell through, because his attention was diverted by a considerable Afghán force that was collecting in Zurmat with a view to preventing the junction that was contemplated by the English.

* In a previous place we have made out the distance between Kandahar and Ghazni to be 232 miles. Further on we give another route.—*Author.*

The Bengal troops of the Southern Column left their winter quarters on the 19th (31st) March and proceeded towards Ghazni.

A little before the march began, news was received that bodies of the semi-nomad Hazára tribe, which has long been at enmity with the Ghilzais, had defeated the Afgháns close to Ghazni, that they had seized four of their forts, and that Muhammad-Ján had left Ghazni to attack them. It is necessary to here remark that the English authorities had, long before the march of the Southern Column on Ghazni, entered into an agreement with the Hazáras, and by means of bribes had drawn this wild tribe to their side. In an early telegram sent to the *Daily News* from Kandahar, it was stated that, between Shajui and Ghazni, the English troops expected to receive great assistance from the Hazára chiefs, "who had, through their envoys, promised the English their co-operation."

Immediately after this, information came in to say that Muhammad-Ján had attacked the Hazáras, that his troops had been defeated, and that he himself had been killed. The last part of the report proved to be incorrect. Nevertheless, circumstances appeared to be favourable to the English, for, in the country through which their troops were about to march, they apparently had a powerful ally, whilst, at the same time, their sworn enemy, Muhammad-Ján, had experienced a defeat. Furthermore, in rear of the Southern Column all was quiet.

The object of the English was to paralyse, by means of internal dissensions, the combination of the Afghán tribes, but it was not attained, for we have seen that when General Stewart marched from Kandahar to Ghazni, the Afgháns were able to oppose him with considerable numbers. Moreover, the Hazáras only hindered the Anglo-Indian force from getting the necessary supplies along the road. We should here mention that Rassab-Khán was the head of these friendly Hazáras, and that these allies of the English, after their first quarrels with the Ghilzais, entered into relations with them and so considerably weakened the force of the dissensions brought about by means of English money.

The composition of General Stewart's column was excellent. The *Times* gave out that the receipt of trustworthy information from Calcutta enabled it to announce that, during General Stewart's march from Kandahar to Ghazni, no opposition from the Afgháns was anticipated. At Kábul it had become known that the dissatisfied Ghazni chiefs had arrived at Maidán, in company with the Mustafa, and that they purposed sending the latter to Kábul in order to convey their wishes as to a line of policy.

[The next few paragraphs are taken up with a repetition as to the strength and line of route of General Stewart's column, and also regarding the attitude of the people along that route. General Soboleff then remarks on the advantage obtained by sending General Baker's brigade through the Argazán valley, because, as had been supposed, there was found in the villages a considerable amount of untouched supplies.]

[Text resumed.]

At the commencement of its march, General Stewart's column experienced unfavourable climatic conditions. The days were hot and the nights frosty, and so the general health of the column was not satisfactory.

The two brigades of General Stewart's column reached Khelát-i-Ghilzai on the 25th and 26th March (6th and 7th April) respectively. The march so far had been fortunate. The English troops had met with no serious opposition, and had only at times exchanged a few shots with stray members of the various tribes *en route*.

The *Daily News* received a telegram from Kábul dated 7th (19th) April, to say that the Hazáras had occupied Ghazni, and that Musa-Ján, Yakúb-Khán's eldest son, had been taken by Muhammad-Ján's brother to Wardak, Muhammad-Ján himself having fled from the place. The *Cologne Gazette*, too, received the following telegram from London, dated 5th (17th April): "According to news received from Kábul, Major-General Ross, with 4,000 men, is leaving to effect a junction with General Stewart's column."

Thus the English had begun to advance on Ghazni—the centre of the party that was hostile to them—from two sides, operating with the Kandahar column of a strength of 6,000 men and with a detachment of the Kábul Field Force, numbering 4,000 men. It was very natural, therefore, that they should have every hope that success would attend the movements of the forces working in combination against Muhammad-Ján, who had already been defeated and followed up by the Hazáras. The task, indeed, seemed an easy one.

And yet certain unexpected circumstances somewhat interfered with the carrying out of the English programme. On the one side an attack had been made on General Stewart's line of communications and on the other General Ross found himself amidst a hostile and armed enemy; moreover, that he could not continue his advance in the way that had been planned.

The attack on the communications of the Southern Column is described in a despatch from the Viceroy of India, dated 7th (19th) April.

[Here follows the quotation. General Soboleff then gives an extract from the *Standard* bearing on the same subject.]

[Text resumed.]

The fact of this attack on the communications of the Southern Column is interesting in the sense that it indicates the unfounded conviction of the English commanders and politicians as to the complete pacification of Southern Afghánistán. The unfortunate Major Wadby

fell a victim to the self-sufficiency of the English generals. We have seen how the deceased officer had warned them as to the danger which was threatening his post, and how the aid which was sent him arrived too late; how, too, he had deemed it impossible to quit a post that had been entrusted to him.

Meanwhile, General Stewart's column continued its advance on Ghazni. At Mukkur native spies brought in information that a body of the Sulaimán-Khel tribe of Afgháns, numbering 6,000 men, had joined the Afghán forces under Shirwán; that Shirwán, who had assumed command of the Afghán levies, had consequently 12,000 men under him, and that many of the influential men who had joined him were in favour of an immediate attack on the English, whilst others counselled the adoption of a more cautious line of action and the deferring of any attack until the arrival of reinforcements under the command of the Mullah Mushk-i-Alam. The spies further stated that the Mullah was advancing from Ghazni with 6,000 men, in order to join forces with the Afghán levies under Shirwán.

As General Stewart's column approached Mukkur the inhabitants left their dwellings, and on the 3rd (15th) April General Hughes's advanced guard clearly saw a considerable body of Afgháns moving along with unfurled standards.

It had become evident that the Afgháns had resolved to meet General Stewart's column with arms in their hands, and that the real question now was whether they would be able to join all their forces so as to fall on the English in considerably superior numbers.

The nearer the English came to Ghazni, the more apparent was it that the Afgháns were prepared to make a serious resistance. Beginning almost at Mukkur itself, and in a direction parallel to the line of the English advance, which lay along the foot of the hills, were posted large bodies of Afgháns who fired from time to time at the advancing column.

The movement of the Southern Column from Shajui was attended with great difficulty in consequence of the general resolve of the people along the line of march to obey those of their leaders who were hostile to the English. This circumstance rendered the supply of provisions and of information a very difficult matter. The obtaining of provisions which were so needed for the native portion of the Southern Column was made still more difficult because of the appearance of Hazáras on the left flank. These people took advantage of the presence of their friends to have their revenge on the Afgháns, whose villages they burnt and devastated, in spite of the strict prohibition of the English commanders.

On account of this state of affairs, General Stewart moved his column on Ghazni in a close formation.

On the 7th (19th) April, as the English troops marched out of Mushak,

a fight took place which ended in a military triumph for them. The affair thus occurred.

At a place called Ahmad-Khel, 10 miles to the south of Ghazni, the Afgháns were collected to the number of 15,000, according to English accounts. These bands were commanded by Shir-Ján and Muhammad-Aslam. The Afgháns occupied a strong position on some low hills to the left of the Ghazni road.

[A description of the Battle of Ahmad-Khel, taken from English sources, is here inserted.]

[Text resumed.]

The Afgháns were not pursued by the English cavalry, and this circumstance is explained by the fact that the greater portion of this branch of the English force was told off to protect the transport-train.

After the battle, the English marched 9 miles into Ghazni.

The victory of the 7th (19th) April 1880 must be placed in the same category as that of Chár-Asiáb gained by General Roberts in October 1879, for, as the latter resulted in the occupation of the capital of Afghánistán, so the result of the battle of Ahmad-Khel was the capture of Ghazni, the chief centre of a coalition of the Afghán tribes who were hostile to the English. In both these engagements, the Anglo-Indian troops displayed both steadiness and bravery, and their commanders a knowledge of their work combined with coolness. Both fights were, however, characterised by the one failing of English soldiers—inability to follow up an enemy.* Hence it was that the strength of the Afghán opposition remained unbroken after both of these defeats.

[Here follows a testimony to the bravery shown by the Afgháns at the battle of Ahmad-Khel, based on General Stewart's report.]

[Text resumed.]

General Stewart now hastened to leave Ghazni, and although he had defeated the Afgháns, his position was not a brilliant one. His communications with Kandahar were interrupted; General Ross, who had marched from Kábul to meet him, was surrounded by Afgháns and found himself in a difficult situation. Another detachment, which General Roberts had sent out under Colonel Jenkins, had, on leaving Chár-Asiáb, on the 13th (25th) April, been attacked by Ghilzais, and although it had beaten off its assailants after receiving aid from Sherpur, yet it was obliged to withdraw to General Roberts's head-quarters.

* Throughout his work General Soboleff lays particular stress on this point. The single instance in which he accords praise to the English cavalry is in the following passage.—*Translator.*

"This affair (the defeat of the Afgháns at Zargun-Shahr [Patkao-Shanah in the Logar valley.—W. E. G.] by the cavalry, under General Palliser) incontestably belongs to the number of the most brilliant actions of the English cavalry; in a political signification it had a great importance, as it destroyed in its inception the formation of any fresh and considerable Afghán levies."

On the 16th (28th) April General Stewart's column arrived safely at Saidábád, which Todd says is 36 miles from Ghazni and 46 from Kábul, but the natives looked upon this movement in the light of a defeat of the English force.

14.—Relief of Bengal Troops by Regiments from the Bombay Presidency, and the March of General Stewart's Column from Kandahar towards Ghazni and Kábul.

We have already said that in anticipation of the evacuation of Kandahar by General Stewart's force, Bombay troops had been sent to that city.

The advanced guard of the Bombay troops ordered to Southern Afghánistán consisted of the following: 2nd Battalion 7th Foot, 60th Foot, 4th and 10th Regiments Native Infantry, 2nd Sind Horse, one Panjáb Cavalry Regiment, and two batteries of Artillery (one Horse, one Foot).

Behind the above a Bombay Reserve Division was formed consisting of 2nd Battalion 11th Foot and 2nd Battalion 15th Foot,* 3rd, 9th, 23rd, and 24th Native Infantry Regiments, 3rd Hussars (? 13th), two Native Cavalry Regiments (one of these being the Sind Horse), two batteries (one Foot and one Horse).

The total strength of the Bombay troops, including a battalion of the 15th Foot, may be put down at about 10,000 men. With General Stewart there were about 9,000 men; so that in Southern Afghánistán the English had collected a fairly strong Army Corps.

By the end of February the advanced guard of the Bombay army had crossed the Sind frontier and were marching along the line of communications, where they gradually relieved the Bengal troops. On the 9th (21st) February the 2nd Sikhs were relieved at Chaman by a Bombay Regiment and then went on to Kandahar. On the 2nd (14th) March General Phayre arrived at Kandahar with a portion of the Bombay troops. From Quetta a siege-train arrived. Two weeks afterwards the garrison of Kandahar consisted of the newly-arrived troops, the line of communications being also held by fresh forces from Bombay, so that the Bengal troops located in the city were ready to advance at any moment.

General Primrose was appointed to the command of the Bombay forces, and on the 22nd March (3rd April) he received orders by telegraph to assume command of all the detachments in Southern Afghánistán and on the line of communications to the Indus.

General Stewart received at the same time instructions to move his troops on Ghazni.

* On the Bengal Establishment.—*Author.*

Bombay troops replace those from the Bengal Presidency at Kandahar.

On the 1st (13th) April General Primrose arrived at Kandahar. A portion of the garrison intended for Kandahar, *viz.*, 2 Infantry and 2 Cavalry Regiments were temporarily detained at Pishin.

Attack on the Dubrai outpost.

But two weeks after the departure of General Stewart's column from Kandahar, the communications between this city and Quetta were interrupted. On the 4th (16th) April a strong body of Patháns took possession of Fort Dubrai in the neighbourhood of the Chaman post. As the Anglo-Indian forces which were left after the march of the Bengal troops were numerically very weak, the punishment of the tribes which attacked the above post was entrusted to Shir-Ali Khán's Afghan levies, and they destroyed the settlement of which the inhabitants were the instigators in the attack on Dubrai.

The Bombay garrison of Kandahar is completed.

By the 26th April (8th May) the whole of the garrison ordered for Kandahar had reached that city, with the exception of one regiment of Cavalry which was out on the Quetta road.

15.—Narrative of Ayúb-Khán's movements from the time of his leaving Herát to the date of his encountering the Wali's Troops.

Opinion regarding the undertaking of a march between Kandahar and Herát.

English politicians and generals had some grounds for considering the march of a large force from Herát to Kandahar a very difficult military undertaking requiring great caution and the best preparations. For such an exploit they held Ayúb to be quite unfit, and so they incautiously ignored him.

We do not consider it superfluous to here state that, in the month of January, Farrah was occupied by a small band of horsemen, who had been sent from Herát by Ayúb-Khán, but this body was dispersed by Ibrahim-Khán of Chaknazár, 93 miles to the south of Farrah. Ibrahim was at this time a man advanced in years, and is famous in the history of the Anglo-Afghán War of 1839-42 as the murderer of his guest Doctor Forbes. For 50 years had this man produced dread and horror in the midst of the people around by his daring plundering expeditions. Soon, however, Ayúb-Khán again wrested Farrah, having sent for the purpose several battalions from Herát. According to English statements most of these battalions were destroyed on the road and only 170 men reached their destination.

Meanwhile Ibrahim did not leave Farrah in peace, and he sent word to Shir-Ali, Wali of Kandahar, that Ayúb-Khán was desirous of entering into an agreement with him as to a joint line of action against the English.

Disbelief on the part of the English in Ayúb-Khán's power to harm their cause.

The English believed neither in the strength nor in the ability of Sirdár Ayúb-Khán, ruler of Herát. They regarded him as a puppet in the hands of his soldiery, and supposed that he was not in a position to undertake any decisive action in the direction of Kandahar.* Even when more definite information regarding Ayúb-Khán's troops and their movements reached the English generals, they gave the reports no serious attention.

For the safe protection of the western limits of the province of Kandahar, the English considered the levies of the Wali sufficient.

According to the latest information† the distance between Herát and Kandahar is considered to be 378½ miles; thus—

	Miles.	Total.
From Herát to Sabzawár	...	85
„ Sabzawár to Farrah	80	165
„ Farrah to Washir	80	245
„ Washir to Girishk	60	305
„ Girishk to Kushk-i-Nakhud . . .	31⅝	336⅝
„ Kushk-i-Nakhud to Kandahar . . .	41⅜	378½

The route a good one, but difficult for an European army with a siege-train and *impedimenta*.

This route is the best in the whole of Afghánistán, although it presents in places great difficulties for the movement of a large body of troops. These difficulties would be considerably increased if the army was accompanied by a large artillery-park and a large transport-train. For a European army, with its modern requirements in the shape of equipment and supplies, &c., a march along this route would be attended by enormous difficulties. We have inserted above an account of the difficulties of a march from Kandahar to Herát.

Ayúb-Khán's transport-train, commissariat, and preparations for the march.

We have no particulars as to the amount of transport with Ayúb-Khán's army, but we suppose that he could not have had less than 15,000 camels and other pack-animals for the transport of his commissariat and baggage, &c. This, however, we know, and that is, the ruler of Herát required a very long period in his preparations for the march on Kandahar, although, as we have seen, the province of Herát contains nearly everything that is needed for the collection of a vast transport-system and for the formation of stores. But it was not in this direction that the main difficulties which Ayúb-Khán had to surmount lay. The political question had been solved by him in a perfectly satisfactory manner. He was the independent ruler of Herát; he had brought

Ayúb-Khán's position in the Herát province secured.

* We may here observe that at Kandahar Ayúb-Khán's undertaking was very lightly treated; for, on the 17th (29th) May, a correspondent at this city telegraphed to the *Times* as follows:—"It is known that Ayúb-Khán has been led into error regarding the strength of our forces, so that the march of a brigade to Girishk will probably suffice to arrest his march and to quiet the excitement produced thereby."

† See Appendix X.—*Author*. Appendix III, English Edition.—W. E. G.

under his own influence the neighbouring provinces, including Farrah; he had acquired the necessary authority amongst the nomad and semi-nomad peoples of the Herát province.

Ayúb-Khán gains over the Jamshidis.

In order, too, not to allow the powerful Jamshidis to remain outside the circle of his influence, he had married a daughter of Khán-Aga, the chief of this tribe.

Ayúb-Khán's external relations, and his relations with Mashad.

Whilst maintaining friendly relations with the neighbouring Turkumáns, Ayúb-Khán continued his connection with Mashad, where he had a a large body of sympathisers.

Dissensions at Herát.

But at Herát itself there were both Heráti and Kábuli regiments of infantry, and between these there were frequent rows, so that Ayúb-Khán had to resort to definite measures to prevent his forces falling to pieces. We have mentioned above all the English reports about the dissensions in the garrison of Herát; still we are of opinion that these reports were exaggerated, and based for the most part on bazár gup, and no doubt they were purposely disseminated by the ruler of Herát himself.

Composition of Ayúb-Khán's troops.

Amongst Ayúb's troops were *Kizil-Báshis*, descendants of those Persians who were settled in Afghánistán by Nádir-Sháh during the past century. They are distinguished from Afgháns by their greater fitness for regular service. The late Amir, Shir-Ali-Khán, prized this quality of theirs, and so he enrolled *Kizil-Báshis* in large numbers in his regular cavalry and artillery.

The Kizil-Báshis.

Now the *Kizil-Báshis* are Shiáhs, and they, therefore, hate the Afgháns, who are Sunís, still their amenity to discipline and their comparative honesty have induced many Amirs and Sirdárs to employ them as personal attendants. At the Afghán court Kizil-Báshis, through the system of intrigue, enjoy great influence.

Ayúb-Khán labours to make his artillery effective.

Before his departure from Herát, Ayúb-Khán laboured to make the Herát artillery fit for service, and he manufactured large quantities of ammunition for his breech-loading rifles, of which he had about 12,000. He had, too, to prepare a sufficient quantity of cartridges. Some he got from Mashad. When, however, the British Envoy at Teherán heard of this source of supply, further consignments were stopped by the Persian authorities under pressure from Mr. Thomson.

Ayúb-Khán's treasury.

With regard to the filling of his treasury, Ayúb-Khán had to solve a very important question. In the face of the disorder which reigned in Afghánistán from the autumn of 1878, *i.e.*, from the date of the despatch to the Amir of the English declaration of war, it would of course have

been difficult to count on the receipt from the rich Herát province of all the imposts due from its inhabitants. Nevertheless, Ayúb succeeded in getting sufficient money. The English asserted that just before he left Herát, Ayúb levied a tax on the people for a year in advance. But we would here observe that there exists in Afghánistán, as throughout the greater part of Central Asia, the *khiráj* impost, which is comprised in the payment to the State treasury of a certain portion of each crop in kind. This payment considerably lightened the collection of the stores required for Ayub's army of operation.

The *Khiráj* impost.

When the Herát force had been placed on a war footing, Ayúb-Khán determined to try the fortune of war and to take revenge from the English for their unlawful and harsh treatment of his favourite brother, the ex-Amir, Yakúb-Khán. But before he began his march he seriously considered the question as to the position which the force formed by the Wali of Kandahar would occupy when he himself encountered the English. To arrive at this knowledge Ayúb-Khán entered into secret correspondence with the principal officers of the native forces at Kandahar. This correspondence convinced him that the Wali's troops would on no account be on the side of the English. In all probability, before he actually started from Herát, Ayúb-Khán received a promise from the Chiefs of the Wali's force that they would go over to him. This surmise proved to be thoroughly correct, as was witnessed by the behaviour of the Wali's troops on the 2nd (14th) July 1880, which took the English so much by surprise.

Ayúb-Khán prepares to try conclusions with the English.

His intrigues at Kandahar.

He secures the co-operation of the Wali's troops before leaving Herát.

The British authorities at Kandahar, in spite of all their endeavours to get accurate information regarding Herát and the troops there stationed, did not know either the strength or the composition of Ayúb's forces.

Ignorance of the British authorities as to the strength or composition of Ayúb-Khán's force.

Indeed the whole of the English information regarding the state of affairs at Herát and its ruler, Sirdár Ayúb-Khán, almost up to June 1880, was characterized by contradiction, inexactitude, and was in fact untrue. By a telegram dated Kábul, 27th April (9th May), we were assured that Ayúb-Khán was positively powerless, that he was ready to hide himself in Persia as soon as ever Abdul-Rahmán's power had been firmerly established in Afghán-Turkistán. But we have seen that the facts put Ayúb-Khán's position in a totally different light.

Utter and entire ignorance of the English with regard to the real state of affairs at Herát.

In a telegram from Kandahar, dated 17th (29th) May 1880, it was

notified that Ayúb-Khán had then eleven infantry regiments, *viz.*, five Kábuli, comprising 2,500 men, five Heráti, and one Kandahari. The same source of information informed us that of this number he could put in the field only seven or eight regiments, or not more than 4,000 men.

In a telegram from the Viceroy of India, dated 25th June (7th July), it was stated amongst other things that Ayúb-Khán's forces, "as it is supposed," consisted of seven battalions, each numbering 650 men, or 4,550 men in all.

In a telegram from Calcutta, dated 22nd June (4th July), it was communicated that Ayúb-Khán had arrived at Farrah with 3,000 or 4,000 infantry, the same number of cavalry, and 30 guns.

Almost complete ignorance on the part of the English as to Ayub-Khán's march from Herát.

The first news of the proposed movement on the part of Ayúb-Khán with troops from Herát was received at Kandahar on the 15th (27th) June.* From Colonel St. John's telegram of the 15th (27th) June quoted above, it is seen that the 28th May (9th June) was considered to be the date on which Ayúb-Khán's regular forces would pitch camp outside Herát. When, however, Ayúb-Khán actually left Herát, and how he got to Farrah, *i.e.*, how he got over the interval of 164⅔ miles, we have no exact information. From a telegram from the Viceroy, dated 21st June (3rd July), it is apparent that he reached Farrah on the 12th (24th) June. From a telegram from the same source, dated 29th June (11th July), it is also evident that he on the 18th (30th) June arrived at Farrah *with his entire army*, and that his cavalry patrols had got as far as the Kásh-Rud. Colonel St. John has put forward the surmise that the actual march of Ayúb's forces from Herát began several days after the 28th May (9th June). Let us suppose then that it began on the 1st (13th) June, it will then be found that Ayub got over the distance between Herát and Farrah in 17 days, in other words, that he averaged 7⅔ miles *per diem*, not including halts. As he had with his force an unusually large proportion of artillery and a huge transport-train, Ayúb's march to Farrah cannot but be admitted to have been a remarkable military achievement. Moreover, his cavalry scouts had moved out considerably in advance of the main body.

Ayúb-Khán's march from Herát to Farrah a remarkable military achievement.

When Ayúb-Khán quitted Farrah and moved onwards, we do not know for certain. From a telegram sent by Colonel St. John on the 18th (30th) June, in which he reports that he had begged the Wali not to risk an encounter with Ayúb's regular troops at Washir, we may apparently conclude that the Herát advanced guard had, on the date of

* See General Primrose's despatch, dated 25th August (6th September) 1880.—*Author.*

the despatch of this telegram, arrived at Washir, which is distant 80 miles from Farrah. We should here remark that the road between Farrah and Washir is very difficult, for it has one waterless march over rocky ridges, through steep ravines and marshes, whilst the last march to Washír, 14 miles in length, is stony and hilly. Furthermore, the ascent to the bank of the Kásh-Rud is very steep, and presents great difficulties to field artillery.

Road between Farrah and Washir very difficult.

Thus on the 18th (30th) June Ayúb-Khán's advanced guard was 60 miles from Girishk, where the Wali of Kandahar's forces were assembled. Now, as Ayúb's forces were preceded by cavalry, and as the Wali had also sent out small parties in advance towards Washir, we may hold the very reasonable idea that the scouts of these two Afghán armies, of which one was bent on driving the English out of Kandahar, and the other on protecting that city from the advancing forces, came into collision somewhere between Washir and Girishk. This collision had of course no military character.

The Wali's forces at Girishk.

Point of first collision between Ayúb's and the Wali's forces.

16.—Narrative of Ayúb-Khán's movements from the time of his arrival at the Helmand to the eve of the Battle of Maiwand.

On the 2nd (14th) July 1880, open war between Sirdár Ayúb-Khán, ruler of Herát, and the English, may be said to have begun. On the same day, as we have seen, there went over to Ayúb-Khán's Army the greater portion of the English *allies* from amongst the forces of the Wali of Kandahar.

Date of the commencement of open hostilities between Sirdár Ayúb-Khán and the English.

The Viceroy telegraphed from Simla to London—"St. John has sent a message from the neighbourhood of the Helmand under date 4th (16th) July, that the losses and disorder amongst the Kandahar rebels are greater than he at first telegraphed. The greater portion of the rebels have fled to their homes in consequence of deficiency of supplies. *General Burrows will move out 31 miles from the Helmand, to the position of Kushk-i-Nakhud. Reports tell us that Ayúb-Khán will cross the river to the north of Girishk. The Wali is in our camp.*"

On the 2nd (14th) July the Wali's army disappeared, as we have seen; the greater portion of it joining Ayúb-Khán's standards.

The Wali's troops prove treacherous.

The decisive advance of the ruler of Herát to the Helmand, the mutiny of the Wali's forces, and the want of rations at Girishk, forced General Burrows to retire on Kushk-i-Nakhud.

General Burrows retires on Kushk-i-Nakhud.

On the 5th (17th) July General Burrows reached the place last named. Now that very day, as we have seen from the Viceroy's telegram of the 7th

(19th) July, a portion of Ayúb's cavalry reached Girishk, and his main body on the same date was only 20 miles distant.

On the 8th (20th) July Ayúb's main body crossed the Helmand at Haidarábád, 12 miles above Girishk. The day before, *i.e.*, on the 7th (19th) idem, General Burrows moved his camp to a point 3 miles nearer Girishk. In reporting this circumstance the Viceroy, in his telegram dated 10th (22nd) July, says—"A large body of rebels, both horse and foot, from amongst the population, have joined Ayúb. It is supposed that he intends to attack our forces, but it is said that Ayúb's cavalry will cross the Helmand much lower down. In the neighbourhood of Kandahar there is some agitation."

On the 12th (24th) July the Viceroy telegraphed to London as follows:—"From Kushk-i-Nakhud news has been received at Kandahar, bearing date 10th (22nd) July, that according to reports here received, Ayúb's forces crossed the Helmand at Haidarábád. A portion of his cavalry arrived yesterday 11th (23rd) at Sangar,* 14 miles from Kushk-i-Nakhud, and then turned back. A small body of *Gházis* have collected at Sangar. It is affirmed that they are this day awaiting the arrival of 4,000 horsemen, and to-morrow the advent of Ayúb's main body. But as at Sangar there is but little in the way of supplies for an army, Ayúb cannot remain there more than one day. Fearing a night attack from the enemy's large force of cavalry, General Burrows has removed his camp to a fresh position, where his stores, sick, and baggage animals will be under protection. Reports represent the number of *Gházis* and of those who have joined Ayúb to be 4,000."

The next day, *i.e.*, on the 13th (25th) July, the Calcutta correspondent of the *Times* telegraphed to London that there is but little news from Southern Afghánistán, and that it is not known whether Ayúb intends to fight *or to hasten towards Ghazni;* further, that everything was perfectly quiet in the province of Kandahar.

Ayúb's cavalry skirmish with General Burrows' outposts.

On the 12th (24th) July the Viceroy sent the following telegram to London:—"St. John telegraphs from Kushk-i-Nakhud under date 11th (23rd) July that Ayúb's main body has crossed the Helmand and is encamped on the east bank river, *viz.*, at Haidarábád. Part of his cavalry are foraging in the neighbourhood of the British camp; 400 horsemen came into collision with reconnoitring parties of British Cavalry and have been compelled to retire. In Kandahar and its neighbourhood all is quiet. Reports have come in relating to small local disturbances in the districts of Khelát-i-Ghilzai and adjacent country."

On the 12th (24th) July it was telegraphed from Kushk-i-Nakhud, through Kandahar to Simla, that Ayúb was with his entire army still at Haidarábád, that his cavalry advanced parties had occupied Sangar, and

* On the maps Sanjber, Sanber.—*Author.*

that close to this place the English advanced parties had withstood an attack with the loss of two sowars killed of the 3rd Sind Cavalry.

This was the first encounter between Ayúb and the English in which blood was shed.

Effect at Kandahar of Ayúb-Khán's advance.

The rapid approach of the Afgháns to Kandahar produced a strong impression on that city. The *Bombay Gazette* published a letter from Kandahar, dated 6th (18th) on this question. "During the last few days," says the writer of this letter, "warlike preparations have been actively continued. Ayúb-Khán marched from Herát towards Kandahar about a month ago with a considerable force, consisting of 30,000 men* and 36 guns. Herát lies distant from here 380 miles, and the road to it is very heavy and difficult. According to rumours, Ayúb-Khán is now (*i.e.*, the 6th (18th) July 1880,) six *manzils*, or marches, from here. General Primrose, Commanding at Kandahar, received the earliest news of Ayúb-Khán's departure, *nevertheless, no timely measures were undertaken*, and it was only when the enemy's forces had arrived within 100 miles of Kandahar, that Shir-Ali-Khán, a kinsman of the deceased Amir of that name, who was appointed Sirdár, or Governor,† of Kandahar, was sent with a force of 2,000 Kábulis‡ and six guns to arrest their advance. But the whole of Shir-Ali's forces revolted, and he was consequently unable to act before he got half way. Again, 12 days ago, General Burrows was sent at the head of troops consisting of a regiment of Europeans, two Native regiments, and a detachment of cavalry, in all 3,000 men with six field guns, to show an overpowering front to the enemy. The Kábuli soldiers, who had been despatched beforehand under Shir-Ali-Khán to oppose Ayúb, turned against the English troops under General Burrows. A fight ensued, during which 200 of the Kábulis were killed and a great number were disarmed, and the guns which had been served out to them were recovered. Nevertheless, the greater number of the rebels joined the enemy's forces. General Burrows's force was obliged to retire 25 miles, and at length halted at Kushk-i-Nakhud. This force *was to advance* on Wednesday to meet Ayúb-Khán. At present the greatest panic reigns here. The rich citizens have quietly fled from the place with their families and property. *The people are burying their money and ornaments.* The Hindu merchants are so alarmed that they have closed their shops. *The panic is still stronger in the Fort.* The officers are in a terrible *state of excitement.* Every one is in terror of his life, and at any hour of the day or night groups of people may be seen praying for their safety. All the armed forces encamped outside the fort are now within its walls. Guns have been mounted, but of these there are but twelve, six of

* These figures are exaggerated, as we know.—*Author.*
† He was appointed Sovereign, or *Wali.*—*Author.*
‡ This is not correct.—*Author.*

large calibre and six small ones. For service there are not more than 3,000 troops, European and Native, though a force of 6,000 men and several guns was sent to us some days ago from the reserve. This force will now in all probability not arrive before another fortnight, *as the rains have washed away the ballast of the railway between Jacobábád and Sibi, whilst the Bolán Pass is 30 feet deep in water for a distance of more than a mile.*"

17.—OPERATIONS IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF KANDAHAR. THE DISASTER OF MAIWAND. THE SIEGE OF KANDAHAR BY AYÚB-KHÁN. CRITICISM ON THE SLOW ADVANCE OF GENERAL PHAYRE'S BRIGADE TO RAISE THE SIEGE.

The disaster of Maiwand comes as a surprise on the English people.

We have seen that by the 12th (24th) July, the Anglo-Indian advanced posts had come into collision with those of Ayúb-Khán's force. After the receipt in London of this news, no fresh intelligence came to hand for some time, and we know that the announcement in the House of Commons of the Marquis of Hartington regarding the rout of General Burrows's Brigade produced a terrible impression, the more so as the news was quite unexpected.

The announcement made by the Marquis of Hartington was based on a telegram sent to the Governor of Bombay by General Primrose, Commanding the Kandahar Division, on the 16th (28th) July.

No transport in Southern Afghánistán.

The position of the English in Southern Afghánistán was made considerably worse by the wretched state of the transport-train at Kandahar and on the line of communications, and of this we shall speak more in detail further on. With regard to the railway which had been constructed from the Indus to Sibi, according to a statement made by Lord Granville on the 17th (29th) July, it had been greatly damaged by floods.

In order to explain the real position of affairs in Southern Afghánistán at the end of July 1880, and under what impression both the Indian and English Governments made their dispositions, we consider it useful to quote several telegrams on this subject, which contain all the earliest information regarding the Maiwand disaster:—

Telegram sent by the Viceroy from Simla to London on the 17th (29th) July.

Telegram from the Viceroy of the same date.

Telegram from the Viceroy, dated 17th (29th) July, regarding the sympathy expressed by the Khán of Khelát.

Telegram from the Governor of Bombay, dated 17th (29th) July.

Reuter's telegram sent to the *Times* from Simla on the 16th (28th) July.

Reuter's telegram sent to the *Times* from Simla, dated 17th (29th) July.

Telegram sent to the *Standard* by its Bombay correspondent on the 16th (28th) July.
Telegram sent to the *Standard* by its Bombay correspondent, dated 17th (29th) July.
Telegram from the Viceroy, dated 18th (30th) July.
Telegram from the Viceroy, dated 19th (31st) July.
Telegram from the Viceroy, dated 20th July (1st August).
Calcutta telegram to the *Times*, dated 20th July (1st August).
Bombay telegram to the *Times*, dated 20th July (1st August).
Bombay telegram to the *Times*, dated 21st July (2nd August).
Bombay telegram to the *Times*, dated 21st July (2nd August).
Bombay telegram to the *Times*, dated 22nd July (3rd August).
Kandahar telegram to the *Times*, dated 21st July (2nd August).

Ignorance of the English regarding the real state of affairs prior to the battle of Maiwand.

The above telegrams, in connection with those before quoted, explain the panic which resulted both in India and in England on receipt of the first intelligence regarding the Maiwand disaster. General Burrows's brigade had been routed, the garrison of Kandahar had shut itself up in the citadel, communication with Quetta had been interrupted, General Burrows's troops had fled, and at the head of the flight were all the superior officers. Here were a series of well-established facts which had placed the English in a frightful position in Southern Afghánistán. The most unpleasant issue of all was the ignorance regarding how it had all happened and what Ayúb-Khán intended to do. The English had by this time become aware that at the battle of Maiwand the ruler of Herát had a force numbering 12,000 men and 36 serviceable guns; that his ranks were being augmented by additions from the local population.

Causes insufficiently explained of the disaster at Maiwand.

The defeat suffered by the English at Maiwand on the 15th (27th) July 1880 could not but evoke the most varied reflections in English minds. Above we have already had occasion to indicate some of these, and we have seen how, within a few days of that defeat, there reigned, both in England and in English circles in India, a sort of torpor and absolute ignorance as to the real causes of this frightful reverse. Until it became apparent who was to blame in this misfortune, the most varied guesses were made—guesses which bore traces of the most manifest ignorance. "In the presence of panic the eyes are large"—this well-known proverb had repeated corroboration with respect to the English, who had entangled themselves in a struggle with the Afghán people.

The Bombay army.

In Bombay Presidency, with the exception of small bodies of English troops, there is no regular army, but a militia, which is distinguished neither for severity of discipline nor for any warlike spirit. The best Native

regiments of the Bombay army, namely, the Grenadiers and Jacob's Rifles, as we have seen, not only did not attempt to repel by their fire and their bayonets the attack of a loosely-formed rabble of *Gházis*, but threw their arms away, and sought safety in a disorderly flight. With such troops it would have been difficult for a general of greater capacity than Burrows possessed to have acted at all.

The Bombay Cavalry.

The 3rd Bombay Light Cavalry, the so-called "Queen's Own," and the 3rd Sind Cavalry, both of which took part in the battle of Maiwand, not only did not achieve any brilliant feat, but, when the retreat took place, fled themselves, as if in forgetfulness of the existence of the infantry fighting alongside of them. That these cavalry regiments did not display a knowledge of their duty during the engagement, is apparent from the fact that both corps fled to Kandahar almost in the same condition as when they set out on the march for the Helmand. In both regiments the entire loss amounted to 60 men.

Praise is given to the 66th Foot and the R. A. for the part they took in the battle of Maiwand.

The 66th Foot and the Artillery alone showed that they were worthy of the name of regular troops. The 66th Foot made a heroic defence, and tried to hold on to their standards, whilst the Artillery covered the retreat.

Defective pattern of gun in use in the English and Russian forces operations in Afghánistán and Central Asia respectively.

Certain English officers, in speaking of the Maiwand disaster, expressed regret that the English gunners possessed no ordnance from which the former but obsolete kind of cartridge might have been fired. Such pieces might, in their opinion, have been extremely advantageous against the Afgháns, who frequently operated in dense masses. We might make the same remark with regard to the artillery of the Turkistán Military Circle, where there would be no harm in having two old batteries and some cartridges of the old pattern, for in all our Central Asian Expeditions the enemy has shown a tendency to mass his entire force.

Recognition is made of the noble behaviour of the 66th Foot and of the battery of Royal Artillery.

From the description of the battle of Maiwand we see that the 66th Foot behaved valiantly, and if it could not change the general march of events, it nevertheless showed how an organised and thoroughly well-disciplined body of men will dearly sell their lives and honour, even to an enemy vastly superior in numbers. We are not able in our present work to bring forward certain details relating to the 66th Foot which would be in pleasing contrast to the other unfortunate facts of the Maiwand disaster. We will, however, insert an extract from a report by General Primrose dated 1st (13th) October and published at Calcutta in the *Government Gazette* in the beginning of November 1880.

[Here follows the extract referred to.]

In order to circumstantially explain, as far as possible, the Maiwand catastrophe, we will examine in detail the English operations in Southern Afghánistán, of course only in so far as these support our own exposition of the subject. We have already stated that our object is to narrate the progress of the Anglo-Afghán campaign, according to the materials at our disposal. These materials comprise telegrams from the theatre of war operations, letters from participators in the war, and such official despatches as have found a place in the columns of the public newspapers. We are aware that in some respects it would have been better to await the appearance of a detailed account of military operations compiled by those who took part in the war. Our own account would then have been more complete. But in order to do this we should have had to wait several years. Meanwhile we may allow ourselves to give expression to the opinion that works on a given campaign, which make their appearance several years after that campaign is over, often display great inaccuracies, whilst many of the operations which, in the course of the campaign, appear *in a certain light*, and which call forth on the part of the commanders a *corresponding line of action*, at the close of that campaign are often depicted in a totally different manner, and consequently conclusions which are deduced from such researches not unfrequently bear too theoretical a character, and in fact do not at all represent the truth.

Events in Southern Afghánistán culminating in the Maiwand disaster.

[After describing the Battle of Maiwand from accounts taken from English sources entirely, General Soboleff continues:]

These private letters, although they contain certain contradictions that are very intelligible, since they describe events under a very vivid recollection of the circumstances, they evidently reflect the truth, and this it is difficult to extract from the official accounts, which are for the most part drawn up according to a preconceived plan and often with very partial touches. From the revelations of eye-witnesses writing *immediately after the occurrences*, the true features of the affair can be pictured, whilst from the reports compiled some time afterwards, and, moreover, with the purpose of colouring history, the true picture is not only seldom properly drawn, but is often altogether distorted.

General Soboleff draws upon private accounts for a description of the Battle of Maiwand.

Thus all the responsibility was heaped upon Burrows, the General of Brigade. This settlement of the question seems to us to be, to say the least, unjust. In fact, how could a brigade commander be responsible in a matter the general success of which would have a direct influence on the general position of English affairs in the southern theatre of the Afghán war? Had not Burrows taken upon himself the duty of escorting the untrust-

General Burrows, who had placed himself completely under Colonel St. John, is left to bear the onus and stigma of the Maiwand disaster.

worthy troops of the Wali of Kandahar to the Helmand? When these troops broke into revolt, Burrows was prevented by a formal order from the Indian Government from crossing the Helmand in pursuit. But he decided to act on his own responsibility, and having crossed the river, attacked the Wali's infantry, and recovered the guns. He then retired to Khushk-i-Nakhud, for he did not wish to subject himself to an attack from the Afgháns whilst so far away from his reserves, *viz.*, from Kandahar. And yet on the 15th (27th) July he makes a forward movement, attacks Ayúb-Khán's entire army, and, being defeated, saves himself by a flight to Kandahar. From all the deeds of this unfortunate General prior to his defeat at Maiwand one may regard him as a man who was cautious, but who at the same time, having lost his head, went out to meet the strong force led by the ruler of Herát. This temerity does not tally with his preceding actions. It long remained a riddle and a burden implying the strongest accusation. But, thanks to the publicity characteristic of the English Press, the circumstance was ultimately explained.

Towards the end of August there began to be indications that General Burrows alone was not to blame for the Maiwand disaster. We here produce a telegram from the Calcutta correspondent of the *Times*, dated 31st August (12th September) 1880, which throws a certain amount of light on the event.

[Here follows a translation of a long telegram addressed to the *Times*. After quoting this telegram, General Soboleff makes the following comment.]

General Soboleff casts aspersion on English officers.

From this message it may be seen that English officers were the first to retreat, and that at the head of them all were Colonel St. John, the Political Agent in the Province of Kandahar, and the person who had stood out for the despatch of General Burrows's Brigade to the Helmand, and Colonel Mainwaring, the Commandant of the 30th Bombay N. I.

We would call to mind that when Abdul-Rahmán achieved his remarkable conquest of Afghán-Turkistán, news was received from Persia in March 1880 that Abdul-Rahmán had addressed a proclamation to the people of Herát exhorting them to forget their differences, and to join forces against the English. It was at the same time communicated how Abdul-Rahmán wrote a letter to Ayúb-Khán, ruler of Herát, declaring his readiness to acknowledge him as such after the final defeat of the English. Of course the fight which, according to this news, was then put in train between these two talented Afgháns and the English was attributed to Russian agency.

In the chapter, too, on the armed forces of Herát, we have minutely described how the Herát province has abundant means for the formation of a strong body of troops, and how the factories and arsenals of Herát admit of the possibility of equipping a powerful artillery, and of furnish-

ing infantry with breech-loading rifles. All this was actually effected, and was, moreover, effected by the Afgháns themselves without any outside aid whatsoever. In fact Ayúb-Khán had not a single European with him.

Ayúb-Khán had no allies.

The *Russians* in no way helped Ayub-Khán, who in fact acted by himself, for he met with no sort of approval from Abdul-Rahmán-Khán. This fact was very humiliating to the English, because the recognition that their force was defeated by Herátis without any exterior aid was very disagreeable. Still it was so. Who, then, was to be blamed for the terrible reverse which was experienced by a whole Indian brigade on the 15th (27th) July at Maiwand? Public opinion in England and in Anglo-Indian circles persistently demanded the answer to the question as to who was in fault.

Public opinion indeed accused Generals Burrows and Primrose of incapacity, and the latter also of sending telegrams to Bombay which produced a panic, and of not affording aid to the Indian brigade during their retreat from Maiwand. We will endeavour to examine this accusation, in so far as we can do so, according to the documents in our possession.

Bombay Generals.

Generals Primrose and Burrows did not rise to the responsibility of their positions. In this they are not at fault, for in our opinion the greater proportion of the English Generals of the Bombay Army are no better than they. One and all are unfit for independent command. For that which happened, existing circumstances in the Bombay Presidency are in fault.

Part taken by Colonel St. John in the affairs which culminated in the disaster of Maiwand.

On the other hand, both General Primrose and General Burrows were placed, as it were, under the thumb of Colonel St. John, the Political Agent, who corresponded direct with the Viceroy, and gave his advice to the Generals—advice which was in effect binding on them. We must remember that Colonel St. John, in a telegram to the Viceroy, dated 15th (27th) June, counselled all possible despatch in sending an Anglo-Indian brigade to Maiwand, and that the Viceroy, in a telegram in reply, dated 18th (30th) June, informed Colonel St. John that orders had been given to despatch a brigade to Maiwand. Again, when the Wali of Kandahar's troops deserted, it was St. John who sent word that these troops had fled and gone to their homes. General Burrows was bound hand and foot in the presence of Colonel St. John, so that the categorical orders of the Commander-in-Chief in India could not shove him on to Ayub's army. In the same way General Primrose was not altogether independent in his line of action, and although unsupported, he had, with about 5,000 men, to hold Kandahar and Khelát-i-Ghilzai, the road to Pishin, and also to disperse Ayúb-Khán's army.

In view of all this we are surprised at General Haines's decision, and at his persistent endeavours to make these Generals alone responsible for the disaster which had befallen the English in Southern Afgháuistán.

In view, then, of these facts we cannot unconditionally blame General Burrows for the loss of the battle. Of course he displayed no kind of tactical capacity, and gave no orders for a proper reconnaissance before the fight. Furthermore, he placed all his troops in one line without any reserve, and did not direct the battle himself. His antagonist, an Afghán Sirdár, on the other hand, did so, and he indeed displayed a much greater grasp of the elementary rules of tactics than the English General. Then, again, having at once seen that the day was lost, General Burrows, instead of gradually sending his transport to the rear and beginning a retirement, lost his head and occupied himself in philanthropic deeds, for the performance of which in well-constituted armies there is an Intendance Department.

General Burrows's errors and omissions at Maiwand.

The chief reasons, in our opinion, for the defeat of the English before Kandahar are comprised as follows:—

General Soboleff adduces reasons for the defeat of English forces by Ayúb-Khán's troops.

(1) Thoughtlessness concerning the undertaking which Ayúb-Khán had matured very carefully.

(2) The easy assurance that the Kandahar troops of Shir-Ali would battle with Ayúb-Khán on behalf of British interests.

(3) The persistent demands on the part of the Commander-in-Chief that Ayúb's army should be sought out, attacked, and dispersed.

(4) The placing of generals in command under the orders of Political Agents acting in a civil capacity.

(5) The absence of trustworthy information as to Ayúb's preparations at Herát,* his strength and movements.

(6) The inexcusable negligence with respect to the condition of General Phayre's transport resources.

(7) The withdrawal of Bengal troops from Kandahar, and the substitution of inferior Bombay regiments.

(8) The mistaken notion as to the sympathies of the Duráni population of the Kandahar province.

To hold General Primrose culpable for his telegram regarding the

* Colonel St. John, in his telegram to the Viceroy, dated 5th (17th) July, draws the following deductions in favour of the position of Khushk-i-Nakhud:—

"The position of Khushk-i-Nakhud has many advantages. If the enemy crosses at Girishk and follows the road that we have taken, he will have to meet us either at our fortified camp here, or on ground selected by ourselves." * * * "If he selects the northern road, he will meet us at Maiwand. From this it is evident that St. John was engaged also with strategical problems, and could therefore influence the general decisions of the Supreme Government."—*Author.*

destruction of General Burrows's brigade seems to us out of place, for this telegram was strictly a true one. The brigade *had been* destroyed, because it fled in a state of panic through a waterless tract.

The Maiwand defeat was a good lesson for the British Government, in that it showed them very vividly what might happen if Anglo-Indian troops were sent against a well-organised force even of Afgháns. We do not here speak of what could have taken place if at Maiwand there had been an Army Corps of European soldiers.

Effect of the news of the disaster of Maiwand.

As soon as the news of the Maiwand disaster spread through the country, the native population displayed an attitude hostile to the English. This feeling was evinced throughout the line of communications from Kandahar downwards, until, by degrees, it became apparent almost up to the very frontiers of India.

An official communication dated Quetta, 21st July (2nd August),* announced that, according to rumours in circulation, the tribes between Chaman and Kandahar had assembled.

Effect of the news of the disaster of Maiwand in India.

To amplify the alarming news regarding a panic at Karáchi, telegrams were sent about to say that the whole of the province of Scinde was in a state of the greatest excitement; that troops had been despatched from Bombay to put down the armed bands that had made their appearance in several places; and that the large Mussulmán population of India was displaying great dissatisfaction with the English rule. Apparently, those events had come to pass which might threaten a great rising in India.

It turned out, however, that what had occurred at Karáchi was a false alarm. These occurrences depict in clear colours the humiliating position which the English occupied during the later stages of the Afghán War, but it once more corroborates the expression of opinion which we have on several occasions enunciated, *viz.*, that the military power of the English in India is relative, because the news of the Maiwand catastrophe had produced great excitement amongst the native population, a fact which might be productive of very disastrous consequences. The English Government and the Viceroy of India determined to restore at any cost, and in the shortest possible time, the position of affairs in Southern Afghánistán, and to wipe out the disaster experienced on the 15th (27th) July.

Measures taken to obliterate the moral effect produced by the Maiwand disaster.

In their own place will be reviewed in detail the measures adopted by the English for the attainment of what they had in view. We will now turn to a criticism of the events which followed the Maiwand disaster.

* At this time the telegraph between Kandahar and Quetta was interrupted.—*Author*

We have seen that telegraphic communication between Kandahar and Quetta was interrupted at 11 A.M. on the 17th (29th) July, and that the subsequent news regarding the state of the Kandahar garrison was of a fragmentary kind, and was obtained through the medium of couriers, selected from amongst those natives who were held to be still faithful to the English. Colonel St. John had reported that *the whole country between Kandahar and the English advanced post at Chaman*, a distance of 105 *versts* (70 miles), had risen against the English. To this it must be added that between the named points a portion of the Wali's levies was stationed.

State of the country along the line of communications south of Kandahar.

We have already quoted the Viceroy's telegram of the 25th July (6th August), in which it was stated that nothing special had occurred at Kandahar during the days that immediately followed the disaster at Maiwand; that the garrison of Kandahar was quite able to defend itself; that no news had been received either from Chaman or Khelát-i-Ghilzai; that Ayúb-Khán had not yet approached Kandahar; and that all suspected Afgháns had been sent away from that city.

The state of affairs at and around Kandahar is incorrectly represented by the Viceroy.

General Primrose's Division, with the exception of the detachment which was at Khelát-i-Ghilzai, was obliged, after the Maiwand disaster, to shut itself up for a time in the citadel of Kandahar. As we have seen, to the same place fled the remnants of General Burrows' routed and panic-stricken brigade. General Primrose came to a very wise decision in hastening to withdraw his troops to the citadel of Kandahar, for the city being occupied by a numerous and hostile population was too vast to be adequately defended by a force so small as that under General Primrose, or indeed by a much larger one.

General Primrose is commended for withdrawing to the citadel of Kandahar.

[Here follows a description of the city and citadel of Kandahar.]

Let us now turn to a description of the events which occurred in Southern Afghánistán immediately after the Maiwand disaster. We have seen how General Burrows brought the remnants of his brigade into the citadel of Kandahar. General Primrose considered the forces at his disposal too weak to restore matters to a proper position, and he therefore shut himself up in the citadel, resting his hope on the rapid arrival of reinforcements from Quetta. Meanwhile, he actively engaged himself in placing his refuge in a proper state of defence.

Steps taken by this General.

[General Soboleff now gives extracts from General Primrose's report on the siege of Kandahar, as published in the *Gazette of India*, dated the 27th September (9th October.)

General Primrose wrote all this at a time when not only had the danger not passed away, but when Ayúb-Khán was yet far off. It was, therefore, foolish for him to make out that the sortie of the 4th (16th) August had raised the spirit of his force and had destroyed the confidence of the Afgháns in their own strength. Nothing of the kind had happened, nor could it happen, and results showed that this was so. In fact the situation was very simple. General Primrose's force had left its defences, had tried to discover the strength of the Afgháns on the road towards Quetta, had ascertained that it was great, had been beaten, and had then fled. The results were therefore precisely the reverse of what General Primrose had represented, for the *morale* of the Anglo-Indian garrison had been lowered, and that of Ayúb-Khán's force had been raised. If by the 12th (24th) August the Afgháns had evacuated those positions towards which the English sortie had been made, the cause of their doing so had nothing to do with General Primrose.

Sorties on the part of the English garrison from Kandahar are pronounced failures.

From the official information regarding the siege of Kandahar covering nearly the whole of August 1880, our readers can form for themselves an idea of the alarm which reigned at this time in English society. A large force under Ayúb-Khán was closely besieging General Primrose's Division, which had shut itself up in the citadel of Kandahar. For a considerable distance around, the power of the ruler of Herát was supreme. Communication with Quetta was interrupted. Agitation amongst the population extended far towards the rear. Every one was asking the questions—what is General Phayre's Division doing? Where is the Bombay Reserve Division? At first every one was convinced that General Phayre's troops would advance rapidly to the aid of the besieged force in the citadel of Kandahar, but by the middle of August it had become evident that General Phayre's force was quite useless, being chained to the several posts on the line of communication, and that it could render no active assistance to General Primrose. By this time news had been received of the English sortie from the citadel of Kandahar and of its complete failure at a great cost to the garrison.

Results of the Maiwand disaster.

[General Soboleff, after quoting the opinion expressed by General Haines on the siege of Kandahar and the English sorties therefrom, says :]

Generally speaking, it is impossible to agree with this opinion. We may, however, observe that the force told off for the sorties was too weak. If on the 4th (16th) August this force had been made up to a strength of 2,000 men—and it was quite possible to do this—and if, in the event of the sortie promising to be successful,

General Soboleff criticises adversely the opinion expressed by the Commander-in-Chief in India on the results of the siege of Kandahar.

proper support had been sent out, then it is very likely that the undertaking would have resulted in the complete defeat of Ayúb-Khán. But General Primrose was under the influence of the Maiwand disaster, and did not consider that he had sufficient force to make a decisive effort. We should remember that he had a force of 6,000 regular troops. Before Gok-Tapa, in January 1881, there was a Russian force of the same strength. Against it was a threatening fortress and an overwhelming body of warlike Tekkes. The results are known. The English troops awaited in terror the Afghán attack and looked for assistance. The Russians assumed the offensive and gained one of the most brilliant victories in the annals of Central Asia.

The Indian Government, immediately after the battle of Maiwand, sent a series of telegrams to London to the Secretary of State for Indian Affairs, in which it narrated the circumstances connected with the battle. The greater portion of these telegrams we have inserted above. With the telegrams the Viceroy's Government sent an explanatory *resumé* of the entire progress of events. This *resumé* bears date 22nd July (3rd August), and is included in the following :—

[Here follows a *verbatim* translation of a despatch of the Government of India.]

The report of the Indian Government on the disaster of Maiwand leaves the question open as to who was responsible for that disaster.

From this account it would be difficult to arrive at any definite conclusion as to who was to blame for the misfortune of Maiwand. General Burrows's movement to Maiwand, which occasioned the destruction of his detachment, is explained by the information which reached him that Ayúb intended to surround him. The movement itself was carried out on General Burrows's full responsibility. How it ended is clear from a perusal of the despatch of the Indian Government above inserted. General Primrose is ignored in this document, as if he were in no way responsible for the state of affairs in Southern Afghánistán. He is accused of undue haste in reporting to the Bombay Government the destruction of an Anglo-Indian brigade. Conclusions are formed as though General Burrows was perfectly independent, or as though he had availed himself of the advice of Colonel St. John, the Agent of the Indian Government, regarding all matters which were directly reported to that officer. Colonel St. John was placed in the position of an expert, whose counsels were in fact binding on the General in command.

General Primrose absolved from all blame for the disaster of Maiwand.

On the 3rd (15th) July the Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army telegraphed to General Primrose at Kandahar as follows :—

"The Wali's troops have deserted, and the situation has completely changed. *Burrows must act according to his own judgment*, sending in full reports. He should proceed with caution, because his *reserves are far off*."

On the 5th (17th) July, General Primrose was questioned as to the views and intentions of General Burrows. He then received General Haines's approval with respect to the retirement to Khushk-i-Nakhud.

On the 6th (18th) July General Primrose was asked whether he considered Khushk-i-Nakhud the most favourable *position for covering Kandahar, and for delivering a blow at Ayúb-Khán in case he crossed the Helmand.* Primrose answered the following day that Khushk-i-Nakhud was an important position covering the roads; that green corn was available in abundance, and that the place was at a convenient distance with respect to the despatch of reinforcements to it from Kandahar; that the presence of a detachment there would preserve quiet amongst the people; and that there was much sickness at Kandahar.

On the 9th (21st) July General Haines again invited General Primrose's attention to the question as to the fitness of General Burrows's position for inflicting a blow on Ayúb, and he thus expressed himself: "*It is extremely important that Ayúb should not be allowed to slip past Kandahar in the Ghazni direction without attacking him.* As reinforcements are moving out to you, how far can you strengthen Burrows? What are the views and intentions of this officer? What measures have been adopted by his Intelligence Department to procure news of Ayúb's movements?"

General Primrose did not apparently answer these questions, for the Commander-in Chief telegraphed to him on the 10th (22nd) July as follows:—

"You must understand *that you have full freedom to attack Ayúb,* if you consider yourself sufficiently strong to do so *The Government considers it very important, in a political sense, to disperse Ayub's army, and by every endeavour to stop his progress towards Ghazni.*"

In the *Times* Weekly Edition, No. 197, dated 26th September (8th October) 1880, was inserted an article headed "The Maiwand Despatches." As in this article the facts relating to the Maiwand business are collated in a very circumstantial manner, we consider it perfectly necessary to insert a translation of it here.

[Here follows a *verbatim* translation of a very long article.]

The whole of this document has been written with the evident object of throwing the entire blame on Generals Primrose and Burrows. The Commander-in-Chief is exonerated from all blame, or at least he is only reproached for the fact that General Phayre's division, which formed a reserve at Kandahar, had not been furnished with sufficient transport.

But is it just to cast the entire blame on Generals Primrose and Burrows? Although General Haines telegraphed on the 3rd (5th) July that Burrows was free to act according to his own judgment, and likewise telegraphed on the 10th (22nd) that Primrose had full freedom of action,

yet at the same time he persistently, and almost importunately, pressed on the attack on Ayúb-Khán's strong force. The Commander-in-Chief evidently did not attach sufficient importance to the going over of the Wali of Kandahar's troops to the side of Ayúb. He altogether forgot that with General Primrose remained fewer troops than had been sent with General Burrows; that General Primrose must guard his detachment from the large population of Kandahar and its neighbourhood; that in his ranks there were many sick; that between Kandahar and Quetta there were scattered the smallest posts; and for this, of course, General Primrose was not to blame. Above all, General Haines was very superficial when he demanded that Ayúb's army should be scattered. The Indian Government was very well aware of the quality of the Native troops of the Bombay Presidency, and should, of course, have known how hard Ayúb-Khán had laboured to form an Afghán Army at Herát, which contained everything to enable him to do so. Finally, whilst it very lightly regarded the desertion of the Wali's troops, it subsequently became fully aware how weak, both in *morale* and numbers, was the Anglo-Indian force in Southern Afghánistán; that Ayúb's army was numerically strong and possessed of a large amount of artillery; that it was well armed, and had on its side the feeling of the people of Afghánistán. Evidently, then, the most proper decision for the Government of the Viceroy to have come to would have been to despatch orders to General Burrows to retire to Kandahar, and to move forward to that city reinforcements from General Phayre's division. By a concentration at Kandahar a considerable force would have been available for an attack on Ayúb. Of course such a settlement of the question would have interfered with the conduct of the campaign, but Ayúb-Khán's march across the Helmand with a powerful army should have convinced the English that the campaign was going to be prolonged. Instead of doing this, and of thinking well over the new phase of events, and of checking all haste, leading up to a serious military error, the Anglo-Indian Government decided on risking everything, and foolishly directed General Primrose to search out Ayúb's army, and, having done so, to attack and scatter it. Supplies were stored in the citadel. Of war *matériel* there was abundance. In front of the citadel it was proposed to construct a glacis by pulling down the houses within a given distance of the city walls. During the progress of these works some slight skirmishes took place with the armed population in the neighbourhood. But General Primrose's chief efforts were directed to securing a supply of water for the garrison.

In order to illustrate the military operations undertaken by Ayúb-Khán against Kandahar, we consider it useful to give a description of the principal route between the Kandahar and the Helmand.

[Here follows a description of the route named, but the authority is not quoted.]

As we have already observed, all who were not versed in the details of the military operations in Southern Afghánistán in the middle of July 1880 imagined that the safety of the Kandahar Garrison, besieged by Ayúb-Khán's troops, depended on the rapid advance of General Phayre's Division from Quetta. A telegram from the Governor of Bombay, dated 17th (29th) July, showed, however, that General Phayre could not, under the most favourable circumstances, leave Quetta before the 1st (13th) August. As the distance between Quetta and Kandahar measures 220 *versts* (147 miles), or is covered in 12 marches, not counting halts, and supposing no opposition from the Afgháns were met with *en route*, General Phayre's Division could not reach Kandahar earlier than the 12th (24th) August, or nearly one month after the date of the Maiwand disaster.

Importance of the rapid advance of General Phayre's Division.

Moreover, General Phayre could only effect this in the event of his not being exposed to hostile operations on the part of the local tribes along the line of communications, and provided he had sufficient transport.

In General Phayre's Division there was scarcely any transport at all, so that his troops could not be moved forward until the required number of pack animals had been collected.

General Phayre's Division is without transport.

From what we have stated, then, it was evident that the hopes regarding the speedy aid for the beleaguered English garrison of Kandahar could have no real significance, at least as regards the Quetta Division.

The Reserve Division in process of mobilisation in the Bombay Presidency, as also the drafts from Bengal, could not render assistance either because, under the most favourable circumstances, these reinforcements could not, in the first place, be on the spot before September; and secondly, because they were also detained for want of sufficient transport. In a word, the English proved to be very weak in the southern theatre of military operations, and in order to extricate themselves with success from a difficult situation, they would have to bring into operation some kind of special plan.

Difficulty experienced in mobilising the Bombay Reserve Division.

Such a plan was projected, and, however dangerous and obviously without basis it was, it must nevertheless be classed amongst the number of the most brilliant military conceptions. It was accordingly resolved to evacuate Kábul, to march one portion of the army of occupation under the command of Lieutenant-General Stewart towards Jalálábád and the other under Lieutenant-General Roberts to Ghazni and Kandahar.

Evacuation of Kábul is decided on.

Further on, we shall see how excellently this desperate plan was carried out, and how the English were thus extricated from their difficulty.

Why General Phayre so delayed has not been sufficiently explained.

Along his line of communications he had a considerable body of troops, and these would have sufficed to put down any popular manifestations. But General Phayre was greatly alarmed at such agitation, the more so when he heard at the end of August of the panic at Karáchi.

General Phayre is censured for his slowness.

We know that on the morning of the 15th (27th) August, when his column was ready to march on Kandahar, General Phayre reached Chaman. If he had left this place the same day he could have reckoned on reaching the beleaguered garrison by the 4th day, *i.e.*, by the 20th August (1st September). The glory in that case of the victory over Ayúb-Khán's army would not have belonged to the Bengal force alone, but would have been shared by the latter with the Quetta column.

Comparison between General Roberts and General Phayre.

What was expected of General Phayre and what he undoubtedly could have done had he been possessed of more decision, General Roberts effected. The case, however, admits of no comparison. General Phayre acted timorously and with extraordinary slowness. General Roberts decided on an heroic exploit, and in spite of its incredible difficulty carried it out.

18.—General Remarks on the Anglo-Afghán War of 1878-80.

The winter in Afghánistán.

The winter of 1878 was an unusually mild one.

In 1879 snow fell on the 6th (18th) October on the Hindu-Kush, covering the mountains with a layer several feet thick. At Kábul the nights had become cold, and on the night of the 19th (31st) October the water froze. On the night of the 21st October (2nd November) 9 degrees of frost were registered. On the 30th October (11th November) snow fell around Kábul, but still the days were sunny and not very cold.

Censorship exercised in the case of correspondents with the troops on active service.

Unfortunately, the measures adopted by the Anglo-Indian Government with respect to the despatch of private information from the seat of war do not admit of the possibility of our presenting our readers with a trustworthy picture of the condition of the English troops invading Afghánistán; all despatches were subjected to a strict military censorship, and private correspondents, with the exception of those of the *Pioneer*, were altogether forbidden permission to attend the military operations: combatant officers were told off to furnish information, and they seldom knew anything about the general state of affairs, and were always partial in respect of what their own particular branch of the service might be doing.

Moreover, they did not dare to communicate anything that might be unpleasant to their own chief, and so the truth became obscured. Never-

theless, we know, with the aid of the English papers, how to delineate, to a certain extent, the true condition of the Anglo-Indian army of operations.

The Commissariat Department.

In respect of forage a considerable want was felt. The Commissariat Department of the Indian army had made scarcely any ordinary arrangements which would admit of the possibility of maintaining in Kábul even an insignificant force of cavalry and the smallest number of baggage animals. The insufficiency of forage compelled General Roberts to send two of his cavalry regiments to the rear. The 12th Bengal Cavalry was accordingly ordered from Kábul to Jalálábád, and the 14th Bengal Lancers were sent to Butkhák and Gandamak. Both regiments shortly afterwards returned to India.

The Medical Department below its proper strength

Before the second phase of the campaign opened, news reached London from India that a great insufficiency in the medical *personnel* had been felt, and that a large number of medical officers were hurriedly ordered out from England.

Sanitary state of the Kábul Field Force.

The sanitary state of the English force was fairly satisfactory, although the troops left on the Shutur-Gardan suffered from the sudden and rapid changes of temperature. Cold weather set in very early on the Kábul plain, and this, according to the Natives, pointed to the prospect of a snowy and severe winter.* In all the reports, both official and private, that appeared during the month of September, there was repeated the one hackneyed phrase, "the health of the troops is excellent." But in a communication to the *Times*, bearing date the 22nd September (4th October) there was this sentence, "only a few cases of cholera have occurred in camp;" this shows that the sanitary condition of the force was not so excellent as the reports tried to make out. Further information, too, tells us that cholera made its appearance in three infantry regiments. This is, one of whole series of facts which proves that the news from the Afghán theatre of war was distinguished for a considerable substratum of untruth, and that, in any case, it was much more beyond what really happened than the information which came from the Balkán theatre of war and which was so unfavourably criticised by the English.

The use of the heliograph in the Afghán War of 1878-80.

We consider it useful to observe that the English, during the past campaign (1878-79), made very skilful use of this optical instrument. Its employment in certain cases, *viz.*, on the battle-field or where the people of the country have interrupted telegraphic communication, could

* As a matter of fact we know that it was an extremely mild one.—*Author.*

not be surpassed by anything else. Towards the close of November 1878, at the storming of the Paiwár-Kotal Pass, when General Roberts made his flank attack by the Spingawi gorge, and when the Afgháns drove him back, the heliographic signal which he sent, ordering a front attack to be made, saved him from almost irretrievable disaster. This signal indicated the hour for the general attack on the Afghán position. Both columns then moved simultaneously forward and the pass was gained. But we know also that the use of the heliograph is not confined to maintain warfare. On the battle-field as well, on good sunny days, it may be of almost priceless service. This remark applies only to the heliograph on the English system, which works during sunshine alone. This apparatus consists of a tripod and small mirror. The sun's rays are focussed to the spot whence the signal is being given. For the reciprocal delivery of messages it is thus necessary to have two heliographs. With the aid of these instruments it is possible to convey messages to a considerable distance (nearly 70 miles), provided the heliograph be placed on high ground. Extraordinary lightness and simplicity of construction constitute the very important merits of the heliograph.

The heliographs adopted in France are greatly superior to those of the English pattern, for the French heliographs admit of the transmission of messages with the aid of both the sun's rays and of rays of light artificially produced, so that with them messages can be sent both in cloudy weather and at night. On the other hand, their construction is much more complicated.

In our further description of the Anglo-Afghán campaign, we shall see what service the heliograph was to the English, for, on one occasion, it extricated a whole column from a great difficulty.

The fact of the skilful use by the English of the heliograph and of flag signals must not escape mention. To this we have already drawn attention, but we may here observe that the battle of Chár-Asiáb shows how a skilful use of this instrument considerably facilitates the conduct of an engagement.

In his despatch describing the battle of Chár-Asiáb, General Roberts says that throughout the day, 24th September (6th October), Captain Stratton, who superintended the issue to the troops of his orders by means of optical signals, performed great services. In a letter to the *Times*, describing this fight, the following is said on the same subject: "throughout the day Sir Frederick Roberts, who directed from camp the various movements of the troops, acknowledged the priceless service rendered by the head of the Field Signal Department, Captain Stratton, of the 22nd Foot, whose working of flags when it was cloudy and of the heliograph during sunshine, was excellent."

The heliograph.

Let us now ask our readers to pay special attention to the immense service rendered by the *heliograph* during the investment of the Shutur-Gardan Pass. Lieutenant-Colonel Money's detachment *was positively saved by this optical instrument.** In the position in which this detachment had been placed heliographic signals alone could make it possible for it to learn of the approach of assistance. We have mentioned above that General Gough signalled from Shinkai to the Shutur-Gardan, the distance as the crow flies being 10 miles.†

In a communication to the *Times*, dated 15th (27th) October, it is stated that General Gough signalled to Colonel Money from Kushi. We do not know exactly which of these two statements is the correct one, but we may remark that the distance, in a direct line, between Kushi and the crest of the Shutur-Gardan is 16 miles. During the Afghán campaign, the English very often, and with great benefit, made use of the heliograph. Thus, a paragraph in the *Times*, dated Kábul, 13th (25th) October, states that General Roberts had, the day before, communicated with Ali-Khel by signalling through the intermediate stations at Kushi and the Shutur-Gardan.

During the investment of Sherpur, and because of the destruction of the telegraph line by the Afgháns, the English were obliged to make great use of the heliograph. Unfortunately for them the state of the weather did not always admit of the employment of this remarkable instrument. From a despatch of the Viceroy's dated 14th (26th) December, we learn that Major-General Bright, the Commander of the Pesháwar column, had reported that the weather was cloudy and that the heliograph could not be used.

Our readers should bear in mind our remarks on the extensive use which the English troops made of this instrument in both phases of the Afghán campaign. On occasions we have noticed that the use made of it was in the highest degree original; thus, *one column would communicate with another, through the enemy's position, and this at great distances.* The heliograph must henceforth be an indispensable adjunct of every expedition, to say nothing about great wars, in which it would be of inestimable value.

The use of the telegraph in the Afghán War of 1878-80.

On the 25th August (16th September) telegraphic communication was established as far as Ali-Khel. When, however, the Shutur-Gardan

* This statement is not correct, for the enemy had either been driven off or had from various causes retired before heliographic communication was established.—W. E. G.

† See the map attached to the article entitled "The road between Kásim-Khel and Kábul," on a scale of 6 miles to the inch, inserted in No. 2105 of the *Illustrated London News* of the 18th October 1879."—*Author.*

Pass was occupied, arrangements were made to carry the poles up to the crest of the pass, and this was done by the 7th (19th) September.

General Soboleff, in noticing the circumstance that, during General Bright's *reconnaissance* of the Lughmán-valley, a telegraph-park accompanied the troops, thus writes: "We again think it necessary to observe that the telegraph service with the Anglo-Indian troops operating in Afghánistán was remarkably well performed. It is indeed one of the positive qualities of the Anglo-Indian army, which we cannot but keep in view in our estimate of the military position of the English in Southern Asia." The same remark applies to the extensive use which the English troops made of the *heliograph* during the same campaign.*

The Transport Department during the Campaign.

Inefficiency of the transport service of the Indian army.

We have not, at present, at hand positive details of all the measures which the English adopted to construct a transport-train for the Army of Operations. We only know this, that throughout that army there were endless complaints made about the transport, that it was in fact in disorder, that there were neither transport officers nor transport soldiers; that camel-drivers were with difficulty procured from amongst the inhabitants; that the soldiers had no sort of knowledge of the treatment and great pains necessary in the care of camels.

Extreme importance of a railway-system on the North-Western Frontier.

The concentration of military stores at the base and on the lines of communication was closely connected with the existence of a transport-train. The greatest service in this difficult matter was without doubt afforded by the existing railway-system of India. This railway-system is very punctual and possesses good rolling-stock. But in the tracts occupied by the bases of the operating columns and on the lines of communication, there are no railways at all, whilst the existing roads are for the most part simple tracks along which wheeled-transport can move with difficulty.

The average demand for pack-animals during the war of 1879-80 must have been as great as during the first phase of the campaign. which ended with the Treaty of Gandamak, and in the course of that not less than 70,000 head of camels were required.

Persia co-operates by supplying transport animals.

With regard to the great loss of camels and of pack-animals, the Indian Government found it necessary to buy in Persia a considerable

* In any war between England and Russia, either on the Russo-Persian-Afghán frontier or in Afghánistán, the most modern scientific appliances, including probably "captive balloons," would certainly be brought into use by the Russians. For instance, in General Skobeleff's Akhál-Tekke expedition the electric light was freely used, but I do not know of any such application of "the resources of civilisation" in our last war with the Afgháns.—W. E. G.

number of mules, which were shipped on steamers and sent from Bushire to Karáchi. From Bombay a large number of ponies and mules were received. Towards the end of August orders were sent to hire all the camels, bullocks, and other pack-animals which were procurable throughout India; thus from Sind 2,500 bullocks were despatched.

Want of transport.

Insufficiency of transport and other causes kept the Kuram column in a passive attitude for a very long time. This circumstance put the English out of all patience; their papers got angry and declared "that if there is no transport it is necessary to collect it and march on Kábul without delay." So great, however, was the difficulty of doing this, that a communication was sent from Simla to all the English papers to say that "in Kuram some transport has been collected." Meanwhile, the state of the Shutur-Gardan Pass was such that the movement over it of heavy loads was scarcely to be thought of. The transport was limited to horned cattle, but these were not in sufficient numbers, nor could they carry the whole of the *impedimenta*.

Losing all hope of collecting the amount of transport necessary for the advance of the force on Kábul, and, on the other hand, convinced of the urgency of a forward move, General Roberts decided on making an arrangement with the Ghilzais for the supply of pack-animals for service beyond the pass, and so, without waiting for the completion of his transport-train, to move across the pass.

Difficulty in obtaining transport.

Before we describe the entry of the English troops into the city of Kábul, we will make a few observations on the condition of those troops. We have already noticed with what extraordinary slowness General Roberts's force advanced towards Kábul, and we have observed that the chief reason for this was the extremely bad state of the Commissariat Department, but above all the want of a sufficient amount of transport.

The Ghilzais, who had given a promise to deliver provisions at a point to the west of the Shutur-Gardan, kept this promise directly the Anglo-Indian force reached the Kábul plain. The Amir also helped the English troops. Still the amount of provisions so received scarcely sufficed for current consumption. In marching through the cultivated parts of the Logar valley, the English saw quantities of provisions of all kinds, but they could not make use of them because they had not enough pack-animals to bring them into camp. The Afgháns would not furnish transport, as they knew that the want of it constituted the weak point on the English side. A report sent to the *Daily Chronicle* stated that the Afgháns killed all their camels lest they should fall into the hands of the English, and lest their scanty transport-train should be made complete. We do not suppose that this really happened,

though we think it likely that the Afgháns drove away their pack-animals and hid them in safe places.

The *Bombay Gazette* stated that General Roberts' column of operations, in its march towards Kábul, lost nearly all its pack-animals and more than 20 per cent of its Commissariat stores, and that before the battle of Chár-Asiáb it was looted of 50 boxes of Snider cartridges.

After its arrival at Kábul General Roberts' force was, in respect of transport, in the most pitiable condition. The principal person with whom rested the duty of supervising the transport resources of the Pesháwar and Kábul columns, was at the most difficult moment deprived of the power of making any kind of arrangement.* The small number of baggage-animals which General Roberts had at his disposal was needed for the conveyance of the sick and wounded to India, who had been increasing during the month of December.

The terrible state of the transport-train of the Anglo-Indian Army of Operations, on which tens of millions of rupees had been spent, induced the Indian Government to adopt energetic measures to organise this important branch. Such measures were initiated towards the end of January 1880, but they remained ineffective, so that one of the chief difficulties of the Afghán campaign continued to be the extremely bad condition of the transport-train.

During the campaigns of 1839-42 and 1878-79, the English became convinced that the essence of military success in Southern Afghánistán lay in the question of the organisation of a transport-system. Therefore, the first problem of military operations was the adoption of measures to collect and construct this.

We have seen that in the first phase of the campaign of 1878-79, the English lost 60,000 camels, and that the greater proportion of this loss fell to the Southern Column. The English clearly recognized the impossibility of employing camels to the same extent as they had done before, *i.e.*, if they were to count on success. They therefore solved the difficulty by partially substituting steam-power for camels; thus bringing into operation a more modern method of transport and one better able to aid them in military operations on a large scale. By this resolve they vastly bettered their position in Southern Asia. On the railway which the English engineers had constructed between the Indus and Sibi, *i.e.*, right up to the mouth of the Bolán Pass, the British Government placed great hope. To say nothing of the power it gave of rapidly transporting both troops and stores to the theatre of military operations, it did away with the necessity of entertaining a large number of pack-animals, the collec-

Importance of the railway on the Kandahar line of communications.

* Allusion is here made to General Kennedy being shut up with the force in Sherpur.—*Translator.*

tion of which for military operations is a work of incredible difficulty.

Loss of camels with the Kandahar column.

During the campaign of 1878-79, the Southern Column experienced a colossal loss amongst its camels. In the opinion of the English themselves, camels are almost useless for the transport of military loads, so that the pack-animals collected for the campaign in question consisted principally of mules, horses of the country, and even horned-cattle.

19.—Opinion expressed by General Soboleff that the Anglo-Indian Army is incapable of undertaking military operations beyond the frontiers of India.

The Head-Quarter-Staff of the Indian army had to solve one of the most difficult of military problems. After a burdensome war in Afghánistán, which had dragged on for over six months, requiring the bringing into play of the military resources not only of the entire Anglo-Indian army, but of a portion of those of Great Britain also—a war which had wearied to the greatest extent both the army and the English public, which had weakened nearly every portion of the Anglo-Indian army, which had exhausted the artillery, Intendance, and other *matériel*, which had destroyed the transport resources of those tracts of British India contiguous to Afghánistán. After such a war the Staff of the Indian army had to hurriedly improvise a fresh Army of Operations for another campaign of magnitude, the continuance and proportions of which it would be very difficult to foretell.

In these days when the organisation of military resources is distinguished by its great complexity and its excessive cost, operations such as the Staff of the Indian army had to carry out, must be regarded as difficult in an extraordinary degree. Thus Prussia, after her relatively easy war with Austria, required four whole years of the most energetic labour to prepare for a war with France. We should here observe, however, that Prussia was favoured by her considerable accuracy in finance. France, the richest nation in Europe, after the war of 1870, has only now, *i.e.*, after the lapse of nearly ten years, put together a fresh army, capable of undergoing a fresh and an extensive campaign.

In order to give our readers some idea as to the burdensome conditions under which the English had to form a fresh Army of Operations, we will here insert a short extract from the letters of the Simla correspondent of the *Times*.

[Here follows 1½ pages of matter taken from an English source.]

We deem it necessary to draw the special attention of our readers to this circumstance. For more than two years the English Press has unitedly and loudly, on every occasion, declared that the military power of the English in India is so solid that

Inability of the Indian army to garrison India and to carry on a war at the same time beyond the Indian frontiers.

the Local Army could sustain a great war with any European army that ventured to invade Afghánistán, and to do this England could easily place beyond the frontiers of India 30,000 men, without reckoning the force that would be free to reckon with any Asiatic Power. We take leave to doubt the value of this calculation. The English public, who are not versed in military matters, may possibly have believed this statement, but people in any way acquainted with their military position have been completely undeceived as to why the English papers have exaggerated the military power of India.

On a given occasion we have seen how even a war with Afghánistán, already enfeebled by a struggle with England and by civil war, has demanded the exhibition of such strength that the War Minister of Great Britain has deemed it of extreme necessity to reinforce the Indian army by sending troops both from England and from South Africa.

The English had to occupy themselves with the speedy filling up of the ranks of the Indian army, with the concentration of Intendance, Artillery, and other stores, both at the base and on the line of communications, and they had to construct a transport-train.

The question of the *filling up of the ranks of the army* was to a certain extent decided by calling in soldiers on temporary leave and by enrolling recruits, and also by keeping on time-expired soldiers taken in some cases from regiments which had gone to England. Thus on the 4th (16th) September the transport *Malabar* sailed from Portsmouth with 40 officers on board for Queenstown, there to take in 1,100 non-commissioned officers and men under orders for Bombay and the Panjáb frontier. On the 18th (30th) September there sailed, too, from Portsmouth the steamer *Euphrates*, with 1,000 rank and file and 80 officers for Afghánistán.

Reinforcements from England.

In order to increase the Army of India, the War Minister of Great Britain decided upon the adoption of the following measures:—

I.—From the Chatham garrison the 2-5th Fusiliers and the 30th Foot and six batteries of Artillery were ordered to India.

Retaining regiments whose tour of service had expired.

II.—The following regiments under orders to return to England, *viz.*, the 3rd and 15th Hussars,* the 2-1st and 2-14th Foot, the 1-3rd and 1-5th Foot, the 59th and 73rd Foot were directed to remain in India.

Reinforcements from the Cape of Good Hope.

III.—The 1st Dragoon Guards, the 17th Lancers, the 88th and 90th Foot, and three batteries of Artillery were ordered to be embarked, at the Cape of Good Hope, if possible, during October for India.

* From the 1st to the 25th Regiment Foot, inclusive, each British regiment has two battalions, 1st and 2nd From the 26th to the 59th Regiment, inclusive, regiments have only one battalion. The 60th Foot has four battalions. From the 61st to the 109th Regiment, inclusive, the last regiment of the army, regiments have one battalion each.—*Author.*

General Soboleff here makes no mention of the Rifle Brigade.—W. E. G.

Thus, in order to reinforce the Indian army there were at once put under orders ten Infantry Battalions, four Cavalry Regiments, and nine Batteries of Artillery, together with a considerable number of men drafted from regiments stationed in England.

Hand-to-mouth system of filling the ranks of the British army.

From England, Gibraltar, and Malta it was proposed to despatch to India six battalions of infantry and a special draft to fill up the ranks of the English regiments serving in Afghánistán; 10,000 men were required, but only about 4,500 men were sent off. The extraordinary difficulty in recruiting did not allow of the completion of the ranks to a war footing. Numbers of battalions could only be partly filled up by drafts from the depôts in England, and these again by recruiting. In view of the unsuccessful recruiting amongst the natives of the United Kingdom, the War Minister decided on the enrolment of foreigners, of whom there are large numbers living in London. Germans were taken in preference to all others, and so long as these had served in the Prussian army, no attention was paid to the question as to whether they knew English or not.

Difficulty experienced in maintaining the Native army at a war strength.

In India still greater difficulty was experienced in filling up the ranks of the Native regiments. Before the commencement of the Afghán campaign so many were desirous of being enrolled in the ranks of the Indian army that some sort of selection could be made. In the summer of 1880, however, recruiting parties were offering every eligible Native a premium of ₹50, if he would enlist, and still not many volunteers could be found. From the extracts in the Indian newspapers during the progress of the Afghán campaign, the Natives could form for themselves a very good idea of the unusual bravery displayed by the Afgháns and of their own inability to fight with them. The destruction, too, of the Native and English regiments in General Burrows's brigade still more strengthened the ideas of the Natives in this respect.

Denuding the garrisons of India in order to equip an army for Afghánistán.

The sending away of such large portions of the Anglo-Indian army on service in Afghánistán very materially weakened the military position of the English in the interior of India. This circumstance would necessarily attract the serious attention of the War Ministry, the more so as the general condition of India is not distinguished for any special quiet. Moreover, on the north-east frontier of the country the English have to face two difficulties—the *Assam* and the *Burmese*. Happily for the English the South African complication had come to an end.

Even then certain troops could not be brought up to full strength, because the greater proportion of their numbers were in hospital.

Certain men, who had been through the first phase of the Afghán war, were so enfeebled that no mention could even be made of their entering the ranks of a fresh Army of Operation.

Great strain on the English military system in India caused by the Afghán war.

Thus in the Afghan theatre of war operations there was an army of a strength exceeding 60,000 men, or a little less than one-third of the strength of the whole Indian army, and yet this force appeared to be insufficient, for, after the Maiwand disaster a new division, numbering 5,000 men, was mobilised in the Bombay Presidency in addition to fresh troops that were ordered up from the army in Bengal. To this circumstance we would turn the special attention of our readers, for it is a fresh corroboration of the opinion several times expressed in the present work, *viz.*, that the military power of the Anglo-Indian army has a very relative importance. That army *may perhaps* be in a condition to successfully defend the frontiers of India, but it is altogether unfit, with its present organisation, to undertake aggressive warfare.

[General Soboleff now quotes a long telegram bearing date Sherpur, 5th (17th) December 1879, in which an account is given of the position of affairs.]

Extent of the offensive power of the English in Southern Asia.

From this official despatch we see that, in the face of unfavourable military circumstances beyond the frontiers of India, the English were obliged to put forward all their strength in order to attain merely relative success even over weak Afghánistán. We again invite the attention of our readers to this, in our opinion, very important fact, for it very fully characterises the *offensive* power of the English in Southern Asia.

The English assert that their Indian Army can easily furnish 30,000 or even 50,000 men, for service beyond the limits of India, and that this force is sufficient to maintain a struggle not only with an Asiatic but with a European power, if such should think of marching against India. The present war is interesting in that it admits of the possibility of our correctly estimating the military power of India. We see, then, that the very first failure of the English in Afghánistán has compelled them to leave India almost without troops.

Military position of the English in India.

With respect to the general character of the military position of the English in India, as it existed in the beginning of December 1879, we consider it not altogether useless, in view of the importance of the question as to the military power of Great Britain in India, to here insert the following extract from the *Times*.

[General Soboleff here puts before his Russian readers information relating to the Armed Strength of India and its capability of standing the strain of a prolonged campaign.]

We see that even for the war with Afghánistán, a country without either a state or solid military organisation, the Indian army employed beyond the frontier could not detach an Army Corps of sufficient strength for the complete attainment of a military object. Both campaigns, *i.e.*, the one which ended with the Treaty of Gandamak and that which we are now describing, furnish evidence that the *aggressive power of the Anglo-Indian army is weak*, and that its military-administrative organisation cannot surmount all the difficulties which are present on the north-western frontier of India.

The Sherpur catastrophe considerably narrowed that vast strategical programme with which the English, under the influence of their October successes before Kábul, tickled their imagination.

General Soboleff allows that the English are capable of administering India, but maintains that they cannot wage war beyond her borders.

Of the ability of the English to administer a vast empire with a population of 250,000,000 inhabitants, of the capacity and warlike qualities of their Generals, of the bravery of their soldiers, we have no doubt. We suppose that the English are possessed of vast *defensive* powers in India, but we take leave to express the doubt of their ability to undertake *offensive* operations outside India. Neither the internal condition of India nor the organisation of the Anglo-Indian army admit of an aggressive policy. We are deeply convinced of the correctness of this belief. An examination of the Anglo-Afghán campaign manifestly strengthens this view, and we shall again allude to the subject.

General Soboleff foretells a collision between England and Russia.

The English have too few troops in that country for them to attempt to undertake frontier expeditions. Even their struggle with the Afgháns has proved them to be weak. We ask our politicians and military men to turn their serious attention to our opinion. The question merits the careful thought, for we are deeply convinced that in a very short time, within 10 or 15 years, a collision between Russia and Great Britain will become inevitable in Asia. What sort of events will tend to precipitate that collision we will endeavour to explain at the end of our present work.



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PART III.

POLITICAL.

1.—Brief sketch of Shir-Ali's life from the date of his succession to the throne of Afghánistán to the period of his flight from Kábul.

On the death of the famous Dost-Muhammad-Khán, his eldest son, Shir-Ali-Khán, ascended the throne of Afghánistán. During the first year of his reign, bloody civil wars were carried on, and these made prominent the two remarkable personages, Abdul-Rahmán and Yakúb-Khán. Yakúb-Khán was Shir-Ali's second son, his eldest son, Muhammad-Ali, having been killed in a fight before Khelát-i-Ghilzai in the year 1865.

In 1866 Afghánistán was divided into two States, the capitals of which were Kábul and Kandahar respectively; Afzul-Khán was Amir of the Kábul division, and his brother, Shir-Ali, of the Kandahar division. The province of Herát was a dependency of the Kandahar division.

Both Amirs sought to establish relations with the British Government. The result of these attempts was the following extremely interesting letter which the Viceroy of India despatched from Simla on the 29th June (11th July) 1866 to Afzul-Khán.

[General Soboleff here gives a translation of the letter *in extenso*.]

This letter recognised two Amirs of Afghánistán.

When Shir-Ali lost Kandahar, the Government of Sir John Lawrence addressed Afzul-Khán as "His Highness the *Wali* (Sovereign) of Kábul and Kandahar." He congratulated him on his victory, and then went on to say that neither he nor his rival Shir-Ali would receive any assistance from the British Government, and that they must continue the struggle on their own resources.

In 1867 Afzul-Khán died, and he was succeeded at Kábul by his cousin, Azam-Khán. The Viceroy of India recognized his succession, and sent to Kábul an accredited representative. At this very time Shir-Ali turned to the Viceroy with a fresh request for assistance. In spite of his lofty promise not to interfere in the civil war between the sons of Dost-Muhammad, Sir John Lawrence sent Shir-Ali a present of money and arms, and told him that any further aid of the same kind would depend on the recipient's good behaviour.

From that moment Yakúb-Khán's rise was a rapid one. Having collected an army, though still a young man (his age at this time did not exceed 20) he marched against Kandahar, which he captured in April

1868. After this he proclaimed his father Amir of the whole of Afghánistán. In September 1868 Shir-Ali was installed at Kábul, and by the end of the same year Azam-Khán was finally defeated at Ghazni. Both he and Abdul-Rahmán then fled; the former to Persia, the latter to Russian territory.

Afghánistán now began to settle down. On the 15th (27th) March 1869, Shir-Ali had an interview with the new Viceroy of India, Lord Mayo, at Umballa. The Viceroy told Shir-Ali that the British Government would not interfere in the domestic affairs of Afghánistán. The Amir received good presents, which consisted of money, several stands of arms, a battery of smooth-bore guns, and a number of Arab horses. In order to show the Amir the military strength of British India, several regiments were assembled for his inspection. As we know, Shir-Ali laughed at the *sipáhis*, observing that they were fit only to serve as food for eagles and to manure the ground. Having praised the hill regiments, he asked that a battery of mountain guns, which had been shewn him packed on mules, might be given to him.

Shir-Ali clearly perceived that he did not owe the possession of his throne to the English. The double-sided policy, which recognised his brothers Afzul-Khán and Azam-Khán and himself as Amirs at the same time, decided the line of action which he determined to adopt. Having no objection to a divided Afghánistán, the British Government encouraged civil war in the country and rejoiced when it was in progress. It may be that Shir-Ali desired to find in the English powerful and devoted friends, but, after the Umballa Darbár, he was finally disenchanted of this notion, and so he resolved to take every opportunity of making of Afghánistán a strong military power. We do not know what the English told Shir-Ali about Russia, or what they demanded of him, but we are aware that he was well acquainted with the fact that Sámarkand had been captured, and that Russian troops were approaching the Amu-Daria. In all probability he had thoughts of establishing close relations with the powerful northern State, knowing that this was the alliance which his famous father had desired to cultivate.

Yakúb-Khán knew the English as well as his father did. Having received the province of Herát as his portion, he, in the year 1870, quarrelled with his father because he had formed the intention of making his younger brother, Abdulla-Ján, the son of a favourite wife, the heir to the Afghán throne. Although the Indian Government had given Yakúb-Khán to understand that it would have nothing to do with the question of the succession to the throne of Afghánistán, he well knew the secret intrigues of the Native agents of the British Government. This Government openly appeared anxious to make peace between the father and the son. Shir-Ali then pretended to pardon the rebellious Yakúb, whom, having invited to Kábul, he shut up in prison. Yakúb-

Khán then bitterly repented that he had listened to the insidious counsels of the English. The military renown of Yakúb-Khán and his just treatment of the people created for him a powerful party which helped him in secret.

When Abdulla-Ján died during the summer of 1878, Yakúb-Khán re-appeared on the scene, and when the English invaded Afghánistán and occupied the Khaibar Pass and the Paiwár-Kotal, Shir-Ali, who had fled to the northern provinces beyond the Hindu-Kush, gave absolute power into his hands. The new Amir carried on the struggle with energy, causing the people to work to one end, and with the object of preventing the English from reaching Kábul, he directed the tribes to commence a guerilla warfare. The programme for the continuance of the struggle which Yakúb-Khán laid down with his father's advice was to avoid open engagements, to attack the English transport-train, to interrupt their lines of communication, and not to allow them any rest.

2.—Shir-Ali makes over the Government at Kábul to his son Yakúb-Khán and flies to Afghán-Turkistán.

As we have already learnt, Shir-Ali quitted Kábul in the autumn of 1878, and having confided the continuation of the struggle with the English to his eldest son, Yakúb-Khán, he crossed the Hindu-Kush and appeared in Afghán-Turkistán. His intention was to go to Táshkand and there lay before the Russian authorities an account of the helpless position in which he had been placed through the unjust action of the English. He did not wish to fight with them, but only desired that they would let him alone. Occupied as he had been with the organisation of his own administration, and with the development of his own forces, Shir-Ali well understood that an open struggle with the English would destroy once for all what he had created with so much trouble. When, therefore, the English marched their troops into Afghán territory, Shir-Ali was bitterly mortified, and fled to Afghán-Turkistán, as though he were afraid to see all the horrors to which the Afgháns would of necessity be subjected in a war with their powerful neighbours. He wished to show to his entire suite that the Afgháns had not desired this war, but that it had been brought about by the ambition of the British Government. His belief in the righteousness of the Afghán cause was so profound, that he openly announced his intention, with the aid of the Russian Government, in whose honest motives he had confidence, of laying the history of the origin of the Anglo-Afghán struggle before a conference of the Great Powers of Europe. The unfortunate Afghán did not understand that the powers of Western Europe only went with readiness to a conference when they considered it necessary to check the political growth of the strongest power of all, *viz.*, Russia. He did not

know of the dread that reigned in the West respecting the Russian sovereignty; he did not know that every step that Russia took with the object of increasing her power abroad or of improving her domestic situation, was met in the West with unconcealed vexation. Shir-Ali well knew, however, that the *Ak-Padisháh*, or Russian Tsár, was the most powerful monarch in the world; that Turkey had been crushed by Russia; that Great Britain, as well as Turkey, had been thereby struck. It therefore appeared to him to be quite sufficient to turn to the Russian Government in order to compel the English to refrain from interference with the independence of his country.

Shir-Ali's journey to Táshkand was not accomplished, for he was overtaken by winter in Afghán-Turkistán.* His appearance, however, on the northern side of the Hindu-Kush and his prolonged stay in Afghán-Turkistán had a great influence on the preservation of Turkistán territory for the Afgháns, because, through the force of these circumstances, Afghán troops were kept in this part of the country. Had Shir-Ali been a younger man, and had he depended more on his own strength, he would have carried on the struggle energetically, but to do this in all probability he would have had to considerably reduce the strength of his forces in Afghán-Turkistán. The reduction of the Afghán forces on the north side of the Hindu-Kush might easily bring about an insurrection amongst the Uzbaks and a renewal of the independence of the Uzbak Khanates. This would be a fatal event for Afghánistán, for the Uzbaks contribute a large share of the taxes received in the Amir's treasury.

On the other hand, the weakness of the Afgháns would be taken advantage of by the Amir's sworn enemy, Sirdár Abdul-Rahmán. In that case the Afghán sovereignty would either be finally broken up, or else it would pass into the power of this Sirdár.

Shir-Ali died on the 21st February (5th March)† at Mazár-i-Sharif and he was there buried. Immediately after his death a revolution took place, and this was suppressed only because there happened to be in Afghán-Turkistán a considerable body of Afghán regular troops. Shir-Ali's eldest son, Yakúb-Khán, was proclaimed his lawful heir. The new Amir having succeeded to undisputed power hastened to pacify his subjects, but, in order to effect this, he was obliged to agree to the conclusion of a treaty of peace with the English. Towards the end of May a treaty was concluded, and Yakúb-Khán then began to introduce order into his country. But cruel destiny still followed him. Cavagnari, who had been attached to him in the capacity of chief counsellor by the Indian Government, was murdered. The inhabitants of Kábul had been stirred

* The extraordinary revelations in the *Account of the Russian Mission to Afghánistán in 1878-79*, show that other considerations prevented this journey.—W. E. G.

† Dr. Yavórski, the author of the above work, who was at his death-bed, affirms that he died on the evening of the 8th (20th) February 1879.—W. E. G.

up by the insolence of this official, and on the 22nd August (3rd September) the Amir was relieved of his presence.

3.—Brief sketch of Yakúb-Khán's life, from the date of his succession to the throne of Afghánistan, to the period of the arrival of the British Mission at Kábul.

The British Government received the news of Shir-Ali's death with peculiar gratification, because, with the advent to the throne of Yakúb-Khán, it might easily begin peace negotiations and thus bring a burdensome war to a close.

In Afghán-Turkistán a revolution took place, and several pretenders to the throne of Afghánistán appeared, but Yakúb-Khán's party triumphed over all, and he was proclaimed Amir throughout the entire country. Outwardly he seemed determined to continue the war with the English, still he could not but perceive that his authority, as not yet thoroughly established, might be shaken by internal jealousies. With this idea, he really desired to come to terms with the enemies of his country. In this desire he was met by the English, who proposed to him to enter into negotiations. Although the first attempts to arrange a basis of accord were not successful, at the end of April 1879, Yakúb-Khán quite unexpectedly informed the Viceroy of India of his arrival at Gandamak and of his wish that peace might be established between the two neighbouring powers. Accordingly, on the 14th (26th) May, a Treaty of Peace was signed at Gandamak by Yakúb-Khán and Major Cavagnari, and it was ratified by the Viceroy on the 18th (30th) idem.

There can be no doubt that Yakúb-Khán sincerely desired peace, for his personal interests, as a young sovereign, required that he should pacify the country. He, however, made a fatal mistake in admitting to his capital an English Mission, for, during the first days of Cavagnari's presence, he saw the full nature of his position.

Distinguished for his meddlesome character, Cavagnari on every occasion interfered in the internal affairs of the State, and even in Yakúb-Khán's family matters, and thereby greatly wearied the Amir. Now the inhabitants of Kábul are distinguished for their extraordinary hostility to unbidden guests, and so Yakúb-Khán cautioned the head of the English Mission of the danger which was threatening him, and advised him to act with greater circumspection.

It is not known what made Cavagnari speak to Yakúb-Khán about Sirdár Abdul-Rahmán, who was then in Afghán-Turkistán, and of his being made Governor of Kandahar. Cavagnari could not but be aware that Abdul-Rahmán was the sworn enemy of the family of the deceased Shir-Ali, and that he considered he had a prior claim to the throne of Afghánistán to Yakúb-Khán. The imprudent proposition of the English diplomatist both offended and frightened the Amir, for it shewed that

it was the secret desire of the English to raise up discord in the country, and not to allow the young Amir the opportunity of strengthening his authority of pacifying the population.

A telegram to the *Times* dated the 5th (17th) August 1879, communicated the information that Yakúb-Khán had received three letters from General Aide-de-Camp Von Kaufmann, 1st, Governor-General of Russian-Turkistán. In the two first letters the General congratulated the Amir on his succession to the throne; in the last, written in May, he told him of his own departure for St. Petersburg. Wishing to show that he was acting honourably towards the British Government, Yakúb-Khán gave Cavagnari all three letters to read, and asked him what he was to say in answer.

It is also very probable that the Amir, in so acting, wished at the same time to show the English that he was in the enjoyment of the friendship of his powerful neighbour, Russia. This unexpected circumstance was very displeasing to the English diplomatist. He advised the Amir to reply to the letters, but he insisted that in his answer Yakúb-Khán should say that any further communication with the Governor-General of Russian-Turkistán must be carried on through the Indian Government. This absurd demand is actually opposed to the sense of the 3rd article of the Gandamak Treaty of Peace, which runs as follows.

[Here General Soboleff translates the particular article.]

In all probability Yakúb-Khán intended to scrupulously follow Cavagnari's counsel, but he saw, and not without surprise, that the English Agent was evidently mixing up the question of his relations with a neighbouring State, with the object of concluding a reciprocal political treaty, with the question of his holding ordinary relations with a neighbouring country, the avoidance of which, as every one knows, is frequently impossible. The erection of an artificial *Chinese Wall* between Afghán and Russian-Turkistán, at which the Indian Government aimed, should most certainly be included amongst the number of the most colossal political absurdities, and Yakúb-Khán could but regard Major Cavagnari's solicitations as the wish of the British Government to reduce even the shadow of his independence.

4.—Narrative of the events preceding the Kábul Massacre.

Shir-Ali's warning to the Indian Government against forcing an English Mission or English Agents on Afghánistán.

The deceased Amir, Shir-Ali-Khán, who knew well the character of his subjects, wrote in one of his letters to the Viceroy of India to the following effect: "A strong party in Afghánistán will look with disfavour on an English Mission: the Chiefs and Afgháns of high standing will consider the presence amongst them of an Englishman in the light of an insult.

The Afgháns are convinced that the despatch of English Agents always precedes the annexation of a country to England."

This was the first warning of the Kábul catastrophe. The late Viceroy of India, Lord Lawrence, was of the same opinion, and warned the English Government of the danger of sending English officers to the capital of Afghánistán.

Lord Lawrence's opinion on the subject.

All three columns of the Anglo-Indian Army of Operation, which had taken part in the war between November 1878 and June 1879, had already marched for their respective head-quarters.

Conviction formed by Lord Lytton's Government that peace had been ensured in Afghánistán, in consequence of the treaty of Gandamak.

The Pesháwar Column, which had suffered from sickness more than the rest, had, with the exception of some detachments told off for the occupation of the Khaibar Pass, been sent to India. The detachments left in the Khaibar were numerically very weak.

The *Kuram Column* had been broken up, but still a considerable portion of it was left to form the garrisons of points in the Kuram valley which had been annexed by the Treaty of Gandamak.

The Southern Column had, long before the conclusion of peace, been broken up and a considerable portion of it had marched back to India. Lieutenant-General Stewart, Commanding this column, still remained at Kandahar with 2,000 men, in expectation of the return of the necessary means of transport, but he was under orders to leave that city on the 27th August (8th September).

The representative of Great Britain at Kábul, and, behind him, the Viceroy of India, were completely satisfied with everything that had taken place in Afghánistán from the date of the signing of the Gandamak Treaty, and they had no suspicion that the real state of affairs in this part of Central Asia was indicative of a turn distinctly hostile to the English. The revengeful and perfidious Afgháns, who deeply hated the "red-haired barbarians" from the year 1839, and who were extremely offended at the results of the last war, were secretly preparing a catastrophe.

A vast conclave had been held throughout the country. In it had taken part members of the priesthood, the upper classes of society, Kábul aristocrats, the army and representatives of the mountain tribes, and at the head of these were the Ghilzais.

As soon as the Afgháns became aware of the conditions of the Gandamak Treaty of Peace, public opinion amongst them convicted Yakúb-Khán of weakness and of self-interest.

Ayúb-Khán, the Amir's brother and the ruler of Herát, an ambitious and not over-scrupulous man, wrote a sharp letter to Yakúb-Khán, in which he warmly upbraided him for

Ayúb-Khán's attitude towards Yakúb-Khán on account of the Treaty of Gandamak.

concluding a peace with the English and for not continuing the struggle.

General dissatisfaction throughout Afghánistán at the conclusion of the Treaty of Gandamak.

The general dissatisfaction with the position of affairs in Afghánistán created various kinds of intrigues amongst the kinsmen of the late Shir-Ali-Khán.

Russian correspondence with the Amir.

Probably with the object of showing the Indian diplomatist that Afghánistán enjoyed the friendship of her powerful neighbour (Russia), Yakúb-Khán, according to a communication sent to the *Times*, dated 5th (17th) August, showed Major Cavagnari three letters which he had received from Táshkand from General Aide-de-Camp Von Kaufmann 1st. In two of these, dated March 1879, General Kaufmann congratulated the Amir on his ascending the throne, and in the third, written in May, he informed him of his approaching temporary departure from St. Petersburg.*

One may imagine with what intense interest Lord Lytton's Agent read these letters, which were very courteous and yet contained no trace of aught but friendly wishes.

In all probability a great discussion took place on the subject of these letters between Cavagnari and the Amir. From the English papers we know that Cavagnari consented to the Amir's replying to General Kaufmann's letters, but insisted that in the answer it should be stated that all future communications between the Amir of Afghánistán and the Governor General of Russian-Turkistán should be carried on through the Indian Government.

There exists information to the effect that the Amir directly warned Cavagnari of the danger which was threatening him, and counselled him to go with the members of his Mission to some safer place.†

Major Cavagnari evidently did not attach any special importance to what the Amir said, and considered Yakúb-Khán to be a stronger ruler than he in fact was; he relied in case of necessity on the aid of the Amir's troops.

It is difficult to explain to one's self the obstinacy of the representative of Great Britain, and at the same time one cannot but be surprised at the complete estrangement of the English Mission from the popular life of the Afgháns. This estrangement may be explained on the one hand by the deep hatred and aversion of the Afgháns towards the English, and on the other by the pride and self-confidence of the English. Perfectly regardless of Afghán interests and following only their own, the English were quite ignorant of what was being done around them.

* A translation of these letters will be found amongst the *Russian Correspondence found at Kábul*, inserted as an Appendix to Mr. H. Hensman's *Account of the Anglo-Afghán war of 1878-80*.—W. E. G.

† The Mission occupied two wooden houses, several storeys high in the Bála-Hissár. These buildings were divided by an open space.—*Author*.

Cavagnari's self-confidence and unconcern are inexplicable. It is asserted that he was warned several hours beforehand of the danger which was threatening. During this time he could have moved from the wooden to the stone building; he could have sent word to Ali-Khel, and, it may be, he could have held out for several hours against a headlong and disorderly crowd, and so have allowed time for the arrival of an English force. In any case he could have quitted Kábul, and although such a step might have been against his innate pride, he might, by making a sacrifice of this pride, have rendered a great service to his Father-land.

That Major Cavagnari was to some extent obliged to await the hostile outbreak against the English, is apparent from the following extract from a despatch of the Viceroy to the Secretary of State for India, dated 1st (13th) August, "Communications from Kábul testify to the fact that there has arisen a certain amount of excitement, in consequence of the turbulence of certain regiments, which have lately arrived from Herát."

It seems to us a strange proceeding to have despatched a large body of foragers beyond the city, as though forage and the other requirements of the *personnel* of the Mission could not have been obtained in the bazaar through the Afgháns themselves.

Precursors of the massacre.

But the real precursors of the Kábul massacre were the following circumstances.

On the 26th July (7th August) 1879 there sprang up some unexplained coolness between Major Cavagnari and Yakúb-Khán. The communications between them then became less frequent and shorter as well. Sometimes the Amir altogether refused to receive Cavagnari, alleging as the reason his indifferent state of health. Such audiences as were given became short interviews, lasting only but a few minutes.

On the 1st (13th) August a public brawl took place in the streets of the city between some Afghán soldiers and the escort of the English Envoy. The people took the part of the soldiers, and the Mission escort was assaulted.

On the 4th (16th) August Yakúb-Khán advised Major Cavagnari to curtail* his customary rides through the city and neighbourhood, and expressed at the same time anxiety for his life. Upon this Cavagnari observed that if he was killed, in India there would be found many others ready to take his place.

The Amir understood that the state of affairs in Kábul had become in the highest degree alarming, and he considered it to be his duty to bring this to the notice of the representative of Great Britain at his

* *Daily News.—Author.*

Court. But Major Cavagnari remained deaf to the good counsels of the Amir, for which conduct he paid with his life and involved England in another burdensome war.

On the 22nd August (3rd September) 1879 three Kábul regiments* without arms were encamped in the Bála-Hissár, not far from the quarters of the English Mission. These regiments were awaiting the issue of their pay. Daud-Khán, the Commander-in-Chief, offered them one month's arrears; they clamoured for another month's payment, and on this demand being refused they broke out into open insurrection. All at once a soldier cried out, "Let us kill the members of the English Mission and after them the Amir!" Throwing themselves on the house of the English Mission, the infuriated soldiers began to hurl stones at the escort. The men composing this escort, without receiving orders from Major Cavagnari, who was with the other officers inside the building, opened fire on the Afgháns.

Immediately the latter went off for their firearms, and in a quarter of an hour had surrounded the English quarters and occupied a place which overhung the roof of the building.

The besieged had constructed a kind of ditch, and fired out of the window. At 10 A.M. the inhabitants of the city joined the Afghán regiments.

The Amir sent Daud-Khán to draw off the people, but they beat him, and he returned home wounded.

The Amir then sent his own son, but he was driven away.

About 1 P.M. Cavagnari was wounded by a bullet in the forehead. The fact that the members of the Mission were in a critical position was immediately communicated to the Amir, coupled with demands for assistance. The Amir now wrote a letter containing the expression, "*It is the will of God; I am occupied in preparations.*" This reply, however, was never received. The Secretary of the Mission, Mr. Jenkins, sent a second letter to the Amir, informing him that Cavagnari had been wounded, and demanding immediate assistance. This letter was despatched by a Hindu, but the unfortunate man was cut to pieces.

About 3 P.M. the Commander of the escort, Lieutenant Hamilton, sent Taimur with a letter to the Afghán soldiers, in which he promised to give them six months' pay. By this time the mob had got on the roof of the Residency.

Taimur, with arms in his hands, went out on to the roof to the Afgháns, and he was immediately disarmed. He told them about the issue of six months' pay, but they threw him down from the roof, and, having stripped him, brought him to Karim-Khán, the Brigade Commander, and he ordered him to be confined.

* It was in the first instance supposed that they were Herát regiments.—*Author.*

The members of the Mission defended themselves heroically, for every attempt on the part of the Afgháns to enter the building was repulsed at the point of the bayonet. Towards evening the Residency was set on fire. The defenders then decided upon holding the adjoining stone-built house. They ran towards it, but in a desperate hand-to-hand struggle all fell to a man.

Of the Natives with the Mission* more than a third saved themselves, *viz.*, Imám-Bakhsh, Taimur, a baker, a washerman, a Kahar, one Sikh soldier, 22 foragers, and 3 others; in all 31.

This circumstance has not yet been sufficiently explained. Perhaps a large proportion of those who saved themselves were traitors to the English and had delivered them over to their exasperated enemy.

The unexpected attack on the members of the British Mission and their murder took the English completely by surprise.

Massacre of the members of the British Mission at Kábul in September 1879.

In the midst of the complete triumph of the English on the occasion of their victories over Afghánistán there came from Kábul the completely unexpected and terrible tidings of the mutiny of the Afghán regiments in that city, of their attack on the house occupied by the representative of Great Britain, and of the murder of Major Cavagnari, together with the greater portion of his suite and escort.

Alarm produced in India thereat, and steps taken by the Indian Government to avenge it.

This intelligence produced such alarm in India and expressed so clearly the *actual* meaning of the Gandamak Treaty of Peace that to the Government of the Viceroy there was nothing else left but to order the frontier troops of the Anglo-Indian Army to advance rapidly on Kábul in order to conquer and to pacify uprisen Afghánistán.

First news of disturbances in Afghánistán.

The first news of the insurrection at Kábul reached Simla on the 25th August (6th September) 1879; on the evening of the next day a message reached Simla through Ali-Khel that natives had arrived there from Kábul, who declared that they had seen the corpses of the English officers.

The first reports stated that the regiments had mutinied because they had not received their pay; that the inhabitants of the city had joined the insurgents; and that the Amir himself was a prisoner.

Military measures adopted in consequence of the massacre.

Orders were sent without delay directing the march of a portion of the forces towards the Afghán frontier, and measures were at once adopted for the formation of a fresh Army of Operation.

Before we review these measures and speak of the movements of the

* The Mission consisted of Major Sir Louis Cavagnari, Mr. William Jenkins, Secretary, Lieutenant Hamilton, Commanding the escort, and Dr. Kelly. The escort comprised 26 Cavalry and 60 Infantry soldiers of the Corps of Guides. This regiment is composed of natives of India.—*Author.*

various portions of that army on the one side towards Kábul, and on the other to Khelát-i-Ghilzai and Ghazni, we will give a short exposition of the events which compelled Great Britain to enter upon a fresh and numerically a fourth Afghán war.

Fresh campaign in Afghánistán.

5.—PART PLAYED BY YAKÚB-KHÁN IN THE EVENTS LEADING UP TO THE MASSACRE OF THE MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH MISSION TO KÁBUL. HIS REMOVAL FROM AFGHÁNISTÁN.

What part in all this melancholy business Yakúb-Khán played has not been positively explained. We have seen that the Amir warned Cavagnari of the danger, that he tried to confer with the rebellious regiments, but he did not display the energy of a ruler; in fact, he was weak, and, as it would seem to us, secretly concocting a plot. On the evening of the 22nd August (3rd September) the Amir wrote to the Viceroy regarding the catastrophe, and then declared his true friendship for the English, and the honesty of his own intentions; the next day in another letter he said that the people had arrested him, and he asked for aid from the English.

On the 23rd August (4th September) the Amir sent orders to Kandahar to say that the instructions of the English officers were to be followed.

After that the Amir was silent. He awaited events.

On receipt of a letter from the Viceroy, dated 26th August (7th September) saying that aid would be sent him, the Amir, in a letter dated 30th August (11th September), assured Lord Lytton of his friendly attitude, and expressed regret regarding the destruction of the Mission, observing, "*We cannot fight against the will of God.*"

As soon as it became known in the several provinces of Afghánistán that the English Mission had been overthrown, that the English had decided on taking Kábul by force, and that Yakúb-Khán, though secretly an enemy of the English, had not the strength of character to openly join the national party, an agitation began throughout the country, until the Afghán monarchy, welded together by Shir-Ali, once more fell to pieces. Amongst other matters which now came to the knowledge of the English was the fact that the attack on Cavagnari's Mission was made not by Herát regiments, but by the three regiments which composed the Amir's personal escort.

Towards the end of August 1879 there were at Kábul 12 regiments and 200 guns. Moreover, the regiments from Ghazni and Afghán-Turkistán had been sent for. What brought about the enrolment of these regiments, and why they were thus sent for, is not known for certain. It is only to be supposed that some unknown authority was concentrating

before Kábul a considerable body of troops, with the evident object of making a serious resistance to the English.

These regiments had been raised by the late Amir Shir-Ali in the neighbourhood of Kábul. Not long before the attack on the house occupied by the members of the English Mission, the same regiments had informed Yakúb-Khán that it was their intention in future to select their own Generals: thus, they became a Prætorian Guard, and of this fact Yakúb-Khán informed Cavagnari.

State of affairs at Kábul testified to by some furlough men of the 12th Bengal Cavalry.

In the English camp at Zargun-Shahr there appeared three troopers of the 12th Bengal Cavalry who had been to Kábul on leave, and who were there when the massacre took place. These men made very valuable revelations regarding the state of affairs in that city. They declared that there was no sort of general guidance in the organisation of a defence; that the completest anarchy reigned everywhere; that the gunners had not joined the rest of the troops, but had held altogether aloof; that they had occupied the Bála-Hissár, and had taken charge of the Amir's family and of his property; that they, however, had threatened to join the popular movement if the Amir did not at once return to Kábul *and take upon himself the command of the troops;* that they had threatened to plunder the Bála-Hissár and then gone away because the leaders had not made up their minds to fight.

Constantinople view of the causes which led to the Kábul massacre.

A very interesting letter from Constantinople,* dated 6th (18th) October 1879, describes the views of the Stamboul Turks as to the causes of the fresh Anglo-Afghán struggle: "The struggle which is taking place in Central Asia between the Afgháns and the English exercises the Stamboul Mussulmáns more than may be supposed. In the bazaars of Constantinople there are many merchants of Afghán descent who regularly receive communications from their kinsmen regarding the position of affairs in Afgháníst*á*n. These communications are rapidly disseminated, and excite an unusual amount of interest. It is needless to say that the *Stamboul Mussulmáns desire their co-religionists in Afgháníst*á*n to triumph.* According to intelligence received by the above-mentioned merchants, the last drama in Kábul was played, not so much because the Afghán regiments had not received their pay, but because there were found in the baggage of a member of the British Mission a number of Bibles translated into Arabic, and copies of the Korán printed in the same language. On Major Cavagnari's arrival, the baggage excited amongst the inhabitants of Kábul a suspicion against its owner. It was at first thought that the several packages contained arms; they were therefore seized and searched. It then

* *Gólos*, No. 271 of 1879.—*Author.*

appeared that the contents comprised weapons indeed, but of a religious, rather than of a military, description, and that they had been imported with a mercantile object. The copies of the Korán were lithographed on European paper, a fact which, in the eyes of Mussulmáns, involves an act of sacrilege, because their religious law forbids the printing of their holy book.

"In Afghánistán the Korán is written on an expensive paper prepared from the fibre of a plant which grows in Káshmir. The Kábul Mullahs, who are renowned for their fanaticism, were in a state of frenzy when they saw the obnoxious books. They suspected, moreover, that the foreign translators of the Korán had mutilated its text, so as to favour the diffusion of the Bible teaching. They therefore flocked to the palace of the Amir Yakúb-Khán, and began to shower reproaches freely on him for having allowed a foreign Mission entrance to the capital of Afghánistán for the purpose of diffusing the religion of the *Unbelievers* and of overthrowing the teaching of Islám. Under these circumstances was it that an Afghán regiment came to Kábul, which had seized at Herát the perfected English rifles intended for the equipment of the English Resident's Body-guard. The discovery of these arms, together with the seizing of the printed copies of the Korán, brought the popular irritation to boiling point. The regiment, excited by Mullahs, was of course soon brought into a state of mutiny; it then attacked the residence of Major Cavagnari, and ruthlessly massacred the entire *personnel* of the English Mission. Thus is the progress of affairs described in Stamboul, where everybody says that the English deserved their bitter fate for attempting to insult the religion of the Prophet."* Another paper, in communicating some of the details which I have narrated, very aptly calls to mind that the late Grand Vizier, Ali-Pásha, in his note of the 30th November 1864, addressed to the English Government through the Ambassador of the Sublime Porte in London, described the serious inconveniences that England might cause in Muhammadan countries through the excessive zeal of certain missionaries.

But what part was Yakúb-Khán playing in all this? The answer to this question was of extraordinary importance to the English.

The Indian Government telegraphed to London that the Amir, according to trustworthy information, was on the side of the party which was hostile to the English. But the Amir himself had sent word through an express messenger that he was confined to his house in Kábul, and he begged that he might be helped out of captivity. The English authorities greatly feared that whilst the Amir might not openly go over to the rebels he would give them unity and a regular organisation.

* And this in spite of the ridiculous efforts displayed by the English to prove to Asiatics that it is one of their problems in the East to support and strengthen Muhammadanism.—*Author.*

Although Yakúb-Khán assured the English of his friendship for them, they did not believe him, but supposed that he, and no one else, had sent for troops to Kábul from Ghazni and Afghán-Turkistán. The following telegram conveying that idea was sent from Simla to the *Daily Telegraph*; "In circles possessed of trustworthy information there is no sort of doubt but that the Amir is implicated in the Kábul massacre. Orders were given at Kábul to break off all direct communication with the English. A large body of Momands, who are hostile to the English, occupy Dakka; the road to Kábul is held by a strong Afghán force." In the sincerity of the Amir there appeared to be doubt, so General Roberts was instructed to invite him to prove his friendship by sending a deputation of accredited personages with full powers in order that the general position of affairs might be arrived at.

In the eyes of the English the behaviour of the Amir was extraordinarily mysterious, for, on the one hand, he declared that he was a prisoner, on the other, he protested against the movement of an English force from Kandahar to Ghazni, stating the while that he was the friend of the English.

In a letter to the Governor of Kandahar, Yakúb-Khán told him to carry out all the demands of the English, but the Amir's chief secretary sent with that letter one from himself, in which he said that certain expressions in the Amir's letter were inserted merely that he might show them to the English, but that "they will not be connected with present events." In these words the English saw something hostile to themselves.

In a letter to the Viceroy, dated 30th August (11th September), Yakúb-Khán expresses his position at Kábul in the following manner: "I have received your letter, dated 7th (19th) September, and was very rejoiced thereat. I have fully understood what was written; complete confidence has been re-established, and I have felt great relief at the thought of the friendship shown me by the Viceroy and of his anxiety for my well-being. Recent events have thrown me into the most terrible desperation and grief, *but we cannot fight against the will of God.* I hope so summarily to punish the evil-doers that the news of it may spread throughout the world and serve as a testimony of my sincerity. I have twice written on this subject, and the third time I have sent my communication by the hands of my trusty servant, Shir-Muhammad-Khán. I have written to tell you that during these past eight days I and my family have been preserved by my good servants, and I have met with this fate partly *by bribes* and partly by *deceiving the rebels.* I have sent away the cavalry, and now day and night I consider how I can get rid of the business. If only God would see fit, then the rebels would be speedily punished for their deeds, and *my affairs would be settled to the satisfaction of the British Government.* Certain high officials of these provinces have rebelled, but I diligently and zealously watch everywhere and over all.

I have done everything I could to protect the Nawáb-Ghulám-Hussain. I trust in God and that he will give me the opportunity of showing my sincere friendship for the British Government, and that I have deserved a good reputation in the eyes of the whole world."

We may observe that this, in many respects curious, letter was an answer to one written by the Viceroy, dated 24th August (7th September), in which he informed the Amir that a strong force would speedily move on Kábul to his relief, and that he (the Amir) must use all his efforts to assist this army and facilitate its march towards Kábul.

Thus, Yakúb-Khán in no way desired the English to march on his capital, so that his request for asistance, of which we have spoken above, was probably concocted by the English themselves. The Amir hoped to put himself right with an insurrection, which was directed, not against himself, but against a hated enemy, the English, and in which, in all probability, the leaders did not allow their own Amir to interfere.

The Amir sends an embassy to General Roberts.

On the 9th (21st) September, an embassy from the Amir reached Ali-Khel. It consisted of Wazir-Sháh, Muhammad-Khán, and Mustaffa-Habibulla, together with a whole suite of attendants. The next day General Roberts accorded an audience to the members of this embassy. They gave him friendly assurances in the name of Yakúb-Khán, and expressed the Amir's wish to be guided by the counsels of the English Government. They then handed the English General two letters, in which Yakúb-Khán expressed his satisfaction on the subject of an English alliance and his intention to remain a faithful friend. Furthermore, as the Viceroy communicated in his despatch dated 13th (25th) September, Mustaffa brought letters from Ayúb-Khán, at Herát, in which he stated that the Kábul regiments at Herát had again mutinied, but had been satisfied by the issue of the pay that was due to them. At 3-30 P.M. on the 12th (24th) September, General Baker and the advanced guard occupied Kushi, and telegraphed to General Roberts that the surrounding country was extremely barren, but that the Logar valley was an *oasis* in the midst of a waste, everything in it being fresh and green; that his camp was pitched on an eminence commanding the village; and that supplies were abundant; all around being quiet. Before he left the pass, General Roberts issued a proclamation in which he announced the advance of British troops with the object of occupying Kábul. He warned the peaceful inhabitants and those who had taken part in the attack on the members of the English Mission to have no misgivings for their safety; but those persons found with arms in their hands would, he said, be dealt with as enemies.

We have spoken above of the Amir's embassy to Ali-Khel. General Roberts sent an answer to the Amir, but what he demanded in this letter we do not know for certain; we only know what we have already men-

tioned, *viz.*, that the General was instructed to invite the Amir to display those feelings of sincerity which he professed towards the English Government.

An event now occurred of which, no doubt, Generals Baker and Roberts alone had earlier knowledge. In one of the telegrams from the theatre of war operations it was stated that Yakúb-Khán "arrived on the evening of the 15th (27th) September at Kushi, accompanied by his son, a suite of 45 persons, and an escort of 200 men. The Amir had previously sent to know whether he would be received. At Kábul, the gates of which are shut, complete anarchy reigns. General Roberts left to-day with three regiments for the Shutur-Gardan and Kushi."

The subjoined telegram from Simla to the *Times*,* dated 16th (20th) September, on the subject of the Amir's arrival in the English camp, characterises the views of the English regarding this circumstance.

[Here follows a long *verbatim* translation of matter taken from the columns of the *Times* (Weekly Edition), bearing on this subject.]

After Yakúb-Khán, there appeared in General Roberts's camp at Kushi from Kábul and its neighbourhood popular leaders and distinguished persons, including Dost-Muhammad, Hassan-Khán, and others. After an interview with General Roberts they returned to Zargun-Shahr.

The Amir's arrival in the English camp at Kushi.

With Yakúb-Khán's arrival at Kushi, the English imagined that they might count on his co-operation as an immediate ally, and they supposed that the Amir's example would serve to stop many who were hesitating, and prevent their joining the popular insurrection.

On the 17th (29th) September General Roberts received Yakúb-Khán, Dáud-Sháh, and Mustaffa-Habibulla in Darbár. The Amir was met by a Guard of Honour of the 92nd Highlanders and received a royal salute of 21 guns. The British officers thanked Daud-Sháh for the assistance which he tried to render to Major Cavagnari and his colleagues, and an English doctor examined and bound up his wounds. The Amir appeared to be dejected and harassed.

Of what passed at the conversation between General Roberts and Yakúb-Khán we have no precise information. From what the English say the Amir gave no circumstantial account of the Kábul massacre, and spoke as though he had himself left Kábul secretly. Of detailed information as to the strength of the popular party at Kábul he communicated nothing, and he could not even say positively whether the English would meet with resistance at the capital or not. He, however, declared that he would co-operate by furnishing transport and the necessary supplies.

* *Times* (Weekly Edition), No. 144, dated 3rd (15th) October 1879.—*Author.*

The Amir and his attendants decided on accompanying General Roberts' force, but they previously dilated on their dread lest the march of English troops towards Kábul should cause the mutinous Afghán regiments to plunder the Bála-Hissár. *The Amir seemed to persistently demand of General Roberts that he would abandon his forward movement and give up the idea of occupying the capital of Afghánistán.* Surprised at these demands, General Roberts told Yakúb-Khán that he was not at all disposed to follow his *advice*. The suspicion which the Amir had aroused then grew; he began to be carefully watched and he was placed under a guard. The amiability of the English towards him was replaced by a certain amount of severity.

It was soon stated that Yakúb-Khán had not fled from Kábul at all, but that he had received permission from the leaders of the popular party to appear in the English camp with a view to inducing the English General not to make a forward movement. We altogether refuse this statement, which was nothing more than a fiction on the part of the English made for their own objects. It would have been too simple a thing on the part of Yakúb-Khán to suppose that General Roberts could have listened to such a proposal.

This decided answer from General Roberts is said to have alarmed the Amir. He was afraid, it was added, that in revenge for this failure the leaders of the popular movement would plunder the Bála-Hissár, to which he had removed his family and where all his treasure was. The Amir, it is further stated, became depressed, and expressed a wish to return to Kábul, but of course he was not allowed to go.

Meanwhile the Commission had begun its investigation regarding the behaviour of Yakúb-Khán's ministers, the greater number of whom were arrested. Against them there was, the English maintained, very convicting proof.

The special attention of the Commission was directed to the course of action of the Amir, both during the time of the attack on the Members of the English Mission and also during his stay in General Roberts's camp.

Wali-Muhammad's party, which was deadly hostile to the Amir, used every endeavour to convict him. Yakúb-Khán's position became peculiarly trying from the date of the Kotwál's execution, and the *Times* mentions that he was in a state of prostration and apathy, and left off taking horse exercise with General Roberts and his Aide-de-Camps.

The Amir informed the English General as to his final determination to abdicate, and he placed himself in the General's hands, stating that he should like to receive an income befitting his position as head of the Duránis. And yet, in the face of this declaration, Yakúb-Khán was declared to have the intention of flying to Afghán-Turkistán, so that his guard was doubled.

Towards the end of October, the English announced that the Amir's "guilt" had been established. It was said to have transpired that on the night which preceded the battle of Chár-Asiáb, Yakúb-Khán had received in his tent, which was pitched close to the English camp, Naik-Muhammad, the Commander-in-Chief of the Afghán troops. At the same time it was notified that the English had discovered a plot by which Yakúb-Khán was to fly from General Roberts's camp before a battle which was to come off under the walls of Kábul. We suppose that the whole of this story was a make-up on the part of the English with the object of establishing their charge against the Amir.

Yakúb-Khán was then sent as a prisoner from the English camp as Siáh-Sang to the Sherpur cantonment under escort of a squadron of the 9th Lancers. The whole of his suite, with the exception of four men, were sent away from him; some of these persons were also arrested, including Abdul-Háfiz, the Amir's confidential servant. This person was suspected of carrying on negotiations with the party that was hostile to the English. In the Amir's room there was a sentry, and outside it there was a strong guard.

In declaring to General Roberts his intention to abdicate, Yakúb-Khán said that he would sooner be a forager with the English force than continue to be Amir of Afgháníst*á*n, and that he was ready to go to India, to the island of Malta, to London, or to any other place that the English Government might appoint.

Yakúb-Khán's position had now become worthy of commiseration. He could only be reproached for insincerity towards the English and with a desire to deceive them. To blame him for being in favour of the general desire of the Afgháns, and not in support of the selfish wishes of the English, is in the last degree strange. And yet it was from this point of view that the English examined the Amir's course of action. The desire of the English that the sovereign of the country which they had overrun and humbled should be a blinder adherent than either Lords Beaconsfield or Lytton, is perfectly incomprehensible.

Yakúb-Khán was finally convicted of "treachery," and his fate was decided. The chief points on which his conviction rested were these: (1) his reception of a *hostile* general in the English camp; (2) his desire to fly to Afghán-Turkistán; (3) his refusal to join the suite of General Roberts on his entry into Kábul; and (4) his directing the execution, on the eve of his setting out to go to General Roberts's camp, of Abdul-Karim-Khán, the Kohistáni chief, and a known adherent of the English.

On the 6th (18th) November the Committee of Inquiry finished its investigations into the circumstances attending the murder of the members of the English Mission, and reported that it had carefully inquired into the conduct of the Amir and of the principal Afghán dignitaries, both during the period preceding the massacre and also on the 22nd

August (3rd September), and on subsequent dates. The Committee's report was then submitted to the Viceroy.

We do not doubt but that Yakúb-Khán was an enemy of the English, but we suppose that the proofs which the Committee of Inquiry brought forward on this point were indirect proofs only, in fact that the proofs were mere surmises, without any apparent foundation. Thus, it was asserted that, although the Amir and his counsellors did not anticipate a fatal termination, they reckoned on a serious demonstration, which would suffice to compel Major Cavagnari to represent that his position at Kábul was unbearable; that events had subsequently passed from their control, and that they had then acted on the guiding principle that dead men tell no tales; that the troops had really not clamoured for the pay which was due to them, but because they were incited to do so by their officers, who in their turn were acting under instructions from highly-placed circles, &c.

In order that he might soften the severity of the English towards him, Yakúb-Khán announced that in the city treasure lay hid which had been the property of the mother of Shir-Ali's favourite son, Abdulla-Ján, and that this had subsequently passed to him. General Roberts at once sent off a detachment of troops to the spot which had been indicated. The place having been dug up, gold to the value of £80,000 was found. This treasure was *confiscated on behalf of the English treasury*, so that the Amir was left to repent of his superfluous frankness. Subsequently fresh stores were discovered, consisting of gold and various jewels.

[Here follows the purport of General Roberts's proclamation announcing Yakúb-Khán's abdication.]

Thus fell the deceased Shir-Ali's eldest son, on whom had rested the hopes of his father, of the Afghán people, and of the English themselves. A telegram, sent to the *Times* by a Kábul correspondent, dated 11th (23rd) November stated that Yakúb-Khán had been weak, that he had shown an extreme and undoubted unfitness for government, and that the suspicion that he was the author of the attack on the English Residency had not been removed. We must add that it had not been proved.

Treatment of Yakúb-Khán by General Roberts.

We have already spoken of the position in which Yakúb-Khán was placed with regard to the English when they occupied Kábul. General Roberts had every reason for being obliged to deal harshly with the Amir, who, from being an ally, became a prisoner. For a long period prior to the beginning of the Afghán campaign the English had regarded Yakúb-Khán as a weak character, and unfit, without their aid, to introduce order into his own country. If, then, this idea concerning him were still existing when they came to Kábul, and the English authorities were

convinced that the Amir was perfectly powerless, then his fate should have been guaranteed, and he should have been allowed to continue to be Amir of Afghánistán. But the English had now become assured that the very opposite of this was the case, and they had ascertained that Yakúb-Khán was a plaything neither in the hands of the people nor in their hands, but that he was the leader of the people and the principal, yet secret, enemy of English authority. This was sufficient to finally settle the fate of the Amir, and so he who had so recently been the friend of the English, was now surrounded by a guard and detained as a State prisoner. Yakúb-Khán could not but feel his unalterable position, and therefore it is not surprising that he resolved to put an end to this grievous *state of suspense*.

Accordingly on the 7th (19th) October, the following telegram was issued: "The Amir, Yakúb-Khán, has declared his intention of abdicating; General Roberts has vainly endeavoured to assure him that he cannot accept this decision. At the same time the General has taken timely steps for the preservation of order and for the carrying on of the administration."

In order to understand the reasons which induced Yakúb-Khán to abdicate, it is necessary to briefly examine the actions of the English at Kábul in the order of the events which called forth and attended the massacre of the members of the English Mission.

As soon as General Roberts's force appeared before Kábul, many of the chiefs of the Afghán tribes who were suspected of having had a hand in the massacre or of having opposed the advance of the English troops, were arrested and confined as State prisoners in the Bála-Hissár. The discovery in one of the houses of the citadel of important papers, compromising the Mustafa Habi-Bulla in the massacre, led to the arrest of this confidential minister of the Amir, and with him several others in Yakúb-Khán's suite.

It is not exactly known for what purpose the English kept Yakúb-Khán so long at Kábul. Why was this dethroned monarch, without money, sick and depressed, needlessly kept in what had been his own capital? It may be that the English awaited fresh revelations on the part of their unfortunate prisoner regarding buried gold and jewels.

General Roberts took from him his five-year old son, Isa-Khán, supposing that he could be made use of politically, and ordered Yakúb-Khán to proceed on the 19th November (1st December) from Kábul towards Pesháwar.

[Here follows an account, taken from the *Standard*, of Yakúb-Khán's removal from Kábul.]

The unfortunate Yakúb-Khán fell a victim to the insatiable and dangerous policy of the English in Asia. This policy is well calculated to lead to the catastrophe which the English were encountering. At

a given moment the English Government resolved to destroy the Afghán monarchy, which it had itself created. It had imagined that a powerful Afghán monarchy would safeguard India from attack from the side of Russia. But it became convinced that Afghánistán was not yielding to English influence, but was rather directing her gaze towards the north, whence was advancing a fresh power—Russia. England was positively afraid of this power, and this dread is the chief and sole cause of all the misfortunes of the Afghán people.

Meanwhile, Yakúb-Khán, who had voluntarily appeared in General Roberts's camp before the battle of Chár-Asiáb and prior to the occupation of Kábul by the English, had fallen into disgrace. The English Commander had, under instructions from the Viceroy of India, arrested the Amir, had proclaimed him a *traitor*, had deprived him of his throne, and had then banished him to British India.

Afghánistán was thus without a sovereign, and so the brave General Roberts took it into his head that he might play the part of Amir; but the General was greatly mistaken. Anarchy had been introduced into the country, and the position of the English in the theatre of military operations had become dangerous.

On the 30th September (12th October) 1879, the Bála-Hissár, or citadel of Kábul, was occupied by English troops. On the 7th (19th) October, Yakúb-Khán was forced to abdicate the Afghán throne, and was subsequently placed under arrest and accused of *treachery* to English interests.

On the 21st November (3rd December) Yakúb-Khán was taken to Gandamak, whence he soon continued his onward journey towards India.

Result of the deposition of Yakúb-Khán.

Afghánistán was deprived of a ruler, and the natural result was that complete anarchy was introduced into the country. Afghán-Turkistán, the greater number of whose inhabitants are Uzbaks, was ready to break up into several independent States. The province of Herát by the force of circumstances became an independent Khánate.

For many reasons, regarding which we shall further on make some short observations, the behaviour of the English towards Yakúb-Khán and their removal of him from his throne do not say much in favour of their political sagacity. Yakúb-Khán incontestibly belongs to the number of prominent personages of Afghánistán, and the English vainly departed from the wise proverb, "a bad peace is better than a good war." After establishing Yakúb-Khán's power at Kábul, and then declaring an amnesty, the English could have treated with the Amir, and could have made him at any time the medium between themselves and the Afghán people, whom they do not at all understand. But they preferred *anarchy*, and in all probability will altogether lose their influence in Afghán-Turkistán, and it may be at Herát. We have said that one of the chief

causes of the Sherpur catastrophe, in which the whole of General Roberts's force barely escaped destruction, was the harsh injustice shown to Yakúb-Khán.

6.—Effect of the Kábul Massacre on English public opinion.

The news of the Kábul massacre called forth a panic in London. The papers preached a general destruction of the Afgháns, and demanded a speedy and severe revenge. One of the papers gave space to a *poem* in which the task of the English troops on arrival at Kábul should be to *kill and burn, in spite of plaint and prayer.* One very widely circulated paper demanded "a punishment which should cause a shudder throughout the vast continent of Asia, from one end to the other." The *Daily Telegraph* counselled the destruction of even the name of Kábul, and the substitution for it of the word *Duga,* which signifies "treachery."

Bloody revenge was to be shown to the Afgháns. "*Kábul,* which has for the second time served as the scene of a terrible destruction of our countrymen, *must be destroyed,* or, at any rate, its walls and citadel must be levelled to the ground," shouted the *Standard.*

Call for revenge.

Thus, into the plan of the Afghán campaign had been introduced one of the most dangerous and terrible of human passions—the thirst for revenge.

As we have already stated, the city of Kábul was the nearest object of the reopening of the campaign, and when in the course of that the news came of the Afghán victories and the investment of General Roberts's force in Sherpur, the feeling of revenge gave place to that of terrible alarm both in Calcutta and in London. This alarm was so serious that, notwithstanding the very large reinforcements which had already been sent from England to India, the Head-Quarter Staff of the Indian Army demanded fresh reinforcements to the number of 5,000 Europeans. At the War Office in London they looked upon the state of affairs at Kábul as very serious, and, although they supposed that General Roberts had sufficient troops to stand out against the Afgháns, pending the arrival of reinforcements, they were afraid that if his force engaged in any further fighting, similar to that which had led to its being shut up in Sherpur, it would become so weak numerically that it would no longer be in a position to defend itself without the aid of considerable reinforcements.

Meanwhile, in consequence of the complete interruption of communication with Kábul, there was alarm and despair in India respecting the fate of the Sherpur garrison. Reuter's telegram of the 12th (24th) December still further increased the uneasy feeling. The telegram ran thus:—"During the last 48 hours a fierce cannonade has been

going on at Kábul. General Gough is still at Lataband. It is supposed that he will leave for Kábul to-day."

[General Soboleff now quotes a telegram to the *Standard*, dated Lahore 12th (24th) December, giving an account of the state of affairs at Kábul about the date quoted.]

7.—Attitude of the population of Afghán-Turkistán during the second phase of the campaign. The Afgháns and the Uzbaks. Probable future of Afghán-Turkistán.

The people of Afghán-Turkistán, Herát, Farrah, and Ghazni, take scarcely any part in the hostilities preceding the conclusion of the Gandamak Treaty of Peace.

During the whole of the campaign of 1878-79, which terminated in the Treaty of Gandamak, the English had only to deal with the Afghán tribes in the Kurram and Kábul villages, and in an inconsiderable degree with the population of the Kandahar province. But Afghán-Turkistán, Herát, Farrah, Ghazni, and other parts of Afghánistán, had taken scarcely any part in the fighting.

A popular movement, which began with the destruction of the English Mission at Kábul, extended throughout Afghánistán, and by the end of September had received a certain amount of organisation. Agents of the leaders of the movement preached in all the towns and larger villages a holy war, and fixed the 15th (27th) September as the date for a general rising. Mullahs took advantage of the Ramzán, a period of fast and prayer, to rouse the fanaticism of a frenzied crowd.

Towards the end of October 1879, news reached Kábul that a portion of the Afghán army, to the number of seven regiments, forming the garrison of Northern Afghánistán, had mutinied and had gone to their homes on the south side of the Hindu-Kush. Two of these regiments, in returning from Afghán-Turkistán, came by the Bámián, and so General Roberts sent to invite them to give up their arms, promising them at the same time *complete amnesty*. The men refused to carry out such a strange demand, and said that they required no amnesty. Nevertheless, through the exertions of the Afghán Colonel, Purvez, the English received 800 rifles, 100 camels, and some tents. These troops then dispersed to their homes. After that, in the beginning of November, there crossed the Hindu-Kush five other regiments, but they would not give up a single fire-arm, and went, some towards Ghazni, others in various directions, where they collected in bands. Thus, in the neighbourhood of Kábul there had now collected a considerable number of armed and trained Afghán soldiers.

All this could not but be known to General Roberts, but he continued to telegraph that all was going on well, and that mere local disturbances did not seriously threaten the English.

If these troops had proper leaders and had advanced in order, their

appearance in the direction of the Bámián Pass would have worked much harm to any expeditionary force towards Ghazni.

[Here allusion is made to General Baker's movement in that direction.]

Happily, however, for the English nothing threatened them in this quarter. The fact was that from Afghán-Turkistán only a few Afghán regiments could come, because the greater number of them were required on the spot in order to uphold the Afghán rule amongst the Uzbaks, who form the bulk of the local population.

The country called Afghán-Turkistán, but which is known to the Afgháns by the name of the *Chahár-Wiláyat*, extends from the northern slopes of the Hindu-Kush range to the left bank of the Amu-Daria. On the east it is bounded by the Pámir plateau, beyond which begin China's Turkistán possessions; on the west by the country of the Arsari, Tekke, Salór, and Sárik Turkumáns. During the reign of the late Shir-Ali-Khán, Afghán-Turkistán comprised a special governorship and included ten provinces. In order to depict the condition of this portion of Afgháuistán before the Anglo-Afghán war, we will avail ourselves of the excellent description given of the country by Colonel Grodekoff of the General Staff, who travelled from the Amu-Duria through the centre of the western portion of Afghán-Turkistán in the autumn of 1878.

[Here follow lengthy extracts from a work by Colonel Grodekoff entitled "Through Afgháuistán."*]

During October 1879 news came that in the other parts of Northern Afgháuistán, in consequence of the weakness displayed by Yakúb-Khán, the Uzbak population had evinced hostility towards the Afgháns.

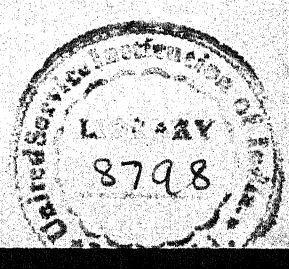
At the other end of Afghán-Turkistán, *viz.*, at Maimana, which had only been conquered by the late Shir-Ali in 1875, disturbances had burst forth and the people had declared themselves on the side of Bukhára. We consider it not superfluous to remark that the former Begship of Maimana for a very long time belonged to the Amirs of Bukhára, and, on being peopled by Uzbaks, it very naturally gravitated towards its chief political centre.

As was to have been expected, the first revolutionary movement occurred in Badákhshán. Here it took the form of general desire on the part of the population to tear itself away from Kábul. The Afghán authorities lost their power but kept their places somehow, only because of the presence of a garrison.

The hatred between the Uzbaks and the Afgháns.

Now, the whole of Afghán-Turkistán, with the exception of certain mountain valleys, is peopled by Uzbaks. The Afgháns are regarded as aliens and are hated by the Uzbaks. Hence, it is very possible that this

* I do not know whether this work is the same as that which has been translated by Mr. Charles Marvin, and which he calls "From Samarkand to Herát." I have ascertained, however, that the original Russian work is "out of print."—W. E. G.



part of Afghánistán will break off its connection with Kábul, and, having become perfectly independent, will elect as Khán a person who is popular amongst the Uzbaks.

Future of Afghán-Turkistán.

It can scarcely be doubted but that Afghán-Turkistán will detach itself from Kábul, and will become one independent State, or, what is more likely, a group of separate Khánates, of which, it may be, Maimana will fall to the Amir of Bukhára. It can scarcely be doubted also that the whole of Northern Afghánistán, from the Amu-Daria right up to the Hindu-Kush, will, by the force of circumstances, be included in the sphere of the direct influence of Russia. England herself has created the state of affairs by the force of which Russia will acquire in Central Asia a really "Scientific Frontier."

8.—History of General Roberts's attempts to establish English protectorates over Afghán-Turkistán and Northern and Southern Afghánistán, and of their failure.

In the end of December 1879, General Roberts appointed as his diplomatic agent in Afghán-Turkistán, Nur-Muhammad, *Kizil-Básh*, who, during the reign of the deceased Shir-Ali-Khán, had been Assistant to the Governor-General of Afghán-Turkistán. With him General Roberts sent Wali-Muhammad's son. The English General supposed that it was an easy matter to bring into subjection the whole of the vast area of Northern Afghánistán. But apparently Ghulám-Haidar was not at all disposed to acknowledge English authority, and so he purposed, by taking advantage of the chaos which then reigned throughout Afghánistán, thanks to the banishment of Yakúb-Khán, to declare himself an independent ruler of the province which the late Amir had entrusted to him. Now, this course of action on the part of the ruler of Northern Afghánistán was in reality a good thing for the English, for Ghulám-Haidar, in order to support his own authority, kept in the province a large body of Afghán troops, and this circumstance resulted in the weakening of the fighting strength of the Afgháns, who were operating in the Kábul valley against the English. The Kábul correspondent of the *Times*, in a telegram dated 19th (31st) January, stated that Ghulám-Haidar would find that he had too little support, both in respect of those troops which he had, and also with regard to the local chiefs, if he wished to preserve a *neutral* position.

In a Kábul telegram dated 2nd (14th) February 1880, in which the news is conveyed of Sirdár Naik-Muhammad's having crossed the Amu-Daria, accompanied by some Turkumán horsemen, the opinion is expressed that, although at heart Abdul-Rahmán must be on the *hostile* side, that is, of Russia, to whom he owed both a pension and an asylum

"He must nourish some *love* also to the Indian Government, which, in answer to his application, had offered him in 1868 a reception, of which he did not avail himself, because he gave the preference to Sámarkand. As a military leader Abdul-Rahmán had undoubtedly shown proofs of his capacity. The general opinion of him throughout Afghánistán is that if only he were supplied with money, with his force of character, it would not be difficult for him to get himself acknowledged as the sovereign of Turkistán, whilst at Kábul itself he would find adherents."

On the 6th (18th) February, a telegram from Lahore reached the *Daily News* to say that the appearance on the left bank of the Amu-Daria, not far from Bálkh, of the Afghán Sirdárs, Ishák-Khán and Sarwar-Khán, *had produced a great impression in the minds of the inhabitants of Kábul*. The English were not needlessly alarmed, for it was announced from Lahore, under date the 8th (20th) February, that in Wardak, which of all the Afghán provinces was the one most hostile to the English, recruits were being enrolled for Abdul-Rahmán's service.

As very often happens, ignorance excites unlimited alarm. Where really is Abdul-Rahmán? Why does he make his movements such a profound secret? Why does he keep so long away from Bálkh? What means the excitement raised on his behalf in Wardak, and in the other centres of the combination of the Afghán tribes? What is the final course that he intends to pursue? All these questions have remained unanswered up till now.

Khush-Dil-Khán, Governor-General of Afghán-Turkistán.

Immediately after Shir-Ali-Khán's death, which took place on the 21st February (5th March) 1879,* at Mazár-i-Sharif, Khush-Dil-Khán, Governor-General of Afghán-Turkistán, went over to the side of Háshim-Khán, and made an attempt at proclaiming him Amir. This attempt was unsuccessful. But to the general surprise Yakúb-Khán did not take revenge on Muhammad-Háshim-Khán, for when the young Amir appeared at Gandamak to confer with the English regarding a Treaty of Peace, in his suite was observed his former rival.†

General Roberts's optimism.

Judging by his telegrams from Kábul, General Roberts apparently did not at all recognise the difficult position in which he was placed. His optimism was such that he planned the direct subjection to English rule of Afghán-Turkistán, whence there came such uncomfortable news. The self-deceit here displayed is worthy of surprise. And even when his troops had begun to experience evident defeats before Kábul itself, he entrusted to Wali-Muhammad a force of 2,000 Takhazis, 1,000 mounted men, and an artillery brigade (equipped with guns taken from the Afgháns), to proceed towards Badákhsháu and to occupy that country in his name.

* This date does not accord with Dr. Yavórski's account.—W. E. G

† *Daily News*, No. 10, 4.8, article entitled *Kábul: its Rulers and its People — Author.*

Meanwhile, information had reached Kábul that Afghán-Turkistán was disturbed, and that popular outbursts were there occurring, and that the life of Ghulám-Haidar-Khán was in danger.

As might have been expected, the appearance of Sirdár Abdul-Rahmán in Afghán territory produced a most depressing effect in England and in English circles in India.

When the war was re-opened, Afghán-Turkistán was under Yakúb-Khan's rule. When, however, Abdul-Rahmán heard of the recommencement of military operations and the march of an Anglo-Indian Army towards Kábul, he determined to put into execution his own sacred wish, *viz.*, to fight for the power which belonged to him of right. He, therefore, sent secret agents to various parts of Afghánistán. His especial attention was turned towards Badákhshán, with which he has established very close connection. As we know, he was in the closest kin-relationship with the dynasty of Badákhshán, had lived for ten years in Russian-Turkistán, under the protection of the Russian Government. Until the time of action of this Sirdár became explained, the English saw in him a man who had been sent by the Russian Government with the object of still further complicating their already terrible situation in Afghánistán. English news, of course on the basis of *trustworthy* information, asserted that with Abdul-Rahmán were Russian officers in the capacity of counsellors, and that whatever this Sirdár did was indicated to him from Táshkand. We know how all this ended, and under what circumstances Abdul-Rahmán compelled the English Government to recognise him as Amir.

Abdul-Rahmán's appearance in Afghán territory completely changed the character of the Anglo-Afghán struggle. He came, it is true, to save the independence of Afghánistán, but he also extricated the English nation from an undertaking in which Lord Beaconsfield's misplaced fascination had entangled it. Russia, aided by Abdul-Rahmán, rendered the utmost service to Great Britain.

Up to the end of March, the Kábul Field Force retained its passive attitude. After this General Roberts and the newly-appointed political agent, Mr. Lepel Griffin, entered into negotiations with the Afghán leaders, and endeavoured to cement relations with Sirdár Abdul-Rahmán, and so to prepare the soil for the establishment of the present Government in Afghánistán.

Meanwhile the inhabitants of Kábul, who were well aware of all that was going on in Afghán-Turkistán, more and more cherished the hope of saving their native land from the hated English, with the aid of this mysterious Sirdár.

We have already had occasion to speak of the attitude of the Afghán people in the face of the firm resolve on the part of Abdul-Rahmán to

fight for the throne of his ancestors. From what has been said, then, it may be seen that *the combination of the Afghán tribes*, which so boldly and stubbornly opposed the English, had for its chief objects the restoration of a national Government and the expulsion of the English from the country. The favourite of the leaders of this combination was Yakúb-Khán, and the country generally wished to see him at the head of the Government. But the British authorities categorically declared that the late Amir should never mount the throne again. This announcement exasperated the Afgháns, and they resolved to somehow or another clear Kábul of the Europeans, whom they detested. Muhammad-Ján took advantage of every opportunity to give trouble to the enemies of his country. In the beginning of June, and consequently before the return to Kábul of the two Sirdárs who had been sent by the English as envoys to Abdul-Rahmán, there reigned amidst the Afghán population the deep conviction (and the Bombay correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* communicated it to London) that in all probability in a short time a holy war would be proclaimed throughout Afgháuistán, or rather throughout the country to the south of Kábul.

In a short time it soon became known that not far from Kábul a large levy of Afgháns under Muhammad-Ján was collected.

It was also proclaimed throughout Afgháuistán that the famous grandson of Dost-Muhammad, having conquered Afghán-Turkistán, and having entered into negotiations with the British authorities at Kábul, at their express desire, was not at all disposed to agree unconditionally to the demands of the Indian Government, but, on the contrary, desired the recognition of the independence of Afgháuistán, according to its limits before the declaration of the war. This definite and good wish for the integrity of Afgháuistán, displayed by the Sirdár, of course drew many adherents to the side of the talented pretender, and Yakúb-Khán's party began to grow weak, in spite of the declaration of Mushk-i-Alam that he would not support any other in Afgháuistán. He had foreseen that Abdul-Rahmán would become Amir, but whatever might happen he had no desire to abandon his position as an adherent of Yakúb-Khán. The first wish of this remarkable man was the restoration of the honour of Afgháuistán and to see his country once more independent. In reality it was to him a matter of indifference who was Amir, provided only he was a true Muhammadan and a good ruler.

In recognising him as Amir of Afgháuistán, the English were perfectly assured that he would use every endeavour to enable them to remove their troops from the country without the display of any hostility. We would observe that it was in Abdul-Rahmán's own interest to do this, and we shall have an opportunity of saying how honestly the new Amir held to the conditions of his treaty with the English. The English, in fact, never had the least right to suspect him of any hostility.

At this stage the Maiwand misfortune occurred, and hence began fresh suspicions. The Russians were once more accused of intrigues.

The Afgháns, who did not consider themselves vanquished, had no desire for an English administration; meanwhile General Roberts interfered in all their affairs, and appointed as Governors of the Maidán, Lugmán, and Kohistán provinces, Sirdárs from amongst the number of adherents to the English cause.

General Roberts having sent Sirdár Muhammad-Hussain-Khán to the Maidán valley to collect taxes, he was immediately seized and killed whilst the Governors of Lugmán and Kohistán fled back to Kábul "This affair will be inquired into," wrote the *Times'* correspondent, "for Roberts is not a man to allow such an offence to pass by without proper punishment."

That the position of the English at Kábul, even immediately after the battle of Chár-Asiáb, was not as brilliant as the several newspapers' correspondents and official despatches represented, is evident from a private letter received in London two weeks before the retirement of the English into Sherpur. In this letter, the contents of which were communicated to the newspapers, it was stated that "*Our troops are surrounded by hostile tribes.* Any attempt on our part to retire would probably end in misfortune. Provisions here are far from being abundant, and the Afghán tribes only refrain from joint action against us because of *the lavish expenditure of money for everything which we buy of them.*"

General Roberts's attempts to set up his own rulers throughout Afghánistán fail.

The people of Maidán, having slain General Roberts's nominee, arrested his son and sent him under escort to Ghazni, with an intimation that everything was ready for an attack on the English, and inviting co-operation.

Meanwhile, the Afghán Duyan, who had been sent by General Roberts to the Logar valley, hastily collected a portion of the outstanding taxes and returned to Kábul, where he informed General Roberts that the tribal leaders were assembling, and that it was necessary to despatch English troops to quiet the population. "But," says the *Civil and Military Gazette*, "the General met this announcement with displeasure." Duyan further informed General Roberts that the people of Kábul were dissatisfied, and were in constant communication with the Afghán tribes and troops, and that the latter had collected to the number of 60,000 men.

Attitude of the people of Ghazni.

The population of the province of Ghazni openly displayed a hostile attitude to the English, and, although at first these indications appeared to the English to have "a local character," they were soon obliged to incline to the belief that *Ghazni was the centre of their enemies.*

Afghán Mullahs openly proclaimed there a holy war against the English. In order to stop the spread of this propaganda, General

Roberts sent strict orders to the Governor of Ghazni to proceed at once to Kábul to explain and report on the occurrence. The Governor of Ghazni at this time was Muhammad-Sayad-Aga, brother-in-law of Shir-Ali, the deceased Amir. He was a man with a very great influence amonst the people, and very rich, and so he paid no attention to the order which had been sent him. Meanwhile, the English reproached him for delaying to obey General Roberts's order, and *for being so long in sending the money and the green corn which comprised the tribute of his district.*

In order to count with some hope of success on an expedition to Ghazni, it was extremely important that the English should secure themselves on the side of Afghán-Turkistán, more especially as it was reported that Afghán troops were advancing thence on Kábul. The efforts of General Roberts to bring about disorder in the province of Ghazni were not altogether without result. Although he did not succeed in breaking up the combination of the Afghán tribes, he incited civil war between the Hazáras and the Afgháns.

There are several sections of Hazáras close to Ghazni. This warlike tribe, which has never fully recognised the Amir's authority, is frequently at enmity with the Afgháns. General Roberts contrived to enter into negotiations with them, and, by means of secret agents, sent them a sum of money. Accordingly, there ensued between the Hazáras and the Afgháns a bloody struggle. In the beginning of January 1880 there appeared in the English camp at Kábul several representatives of the Hazára tribes. The Hazára, Abdul-Kádir, who was to have held Ghazni on behalf of the English, was obliged to surrender that city to Muhammad-Ján's forces on their return from Kábul.

During the investment of Sherpur, the Hazáras made several attacks on Afghán villages, but the inhabitants, on their return from fighting with the English, took a bloody revenge.

The English learnt with especial joy of the serious character of the civil wars that had broken out in the province of Ghazni.

The comparative quiet which reigned in the province of Ghazni during February 1880 inclined the English to the belief that the leaders of the combination against them had begun to recognise the inutility of continuing the struggle.

But soon the English became convinced that they were deeply mistaken. As soon as the spring season set in, agitation spread over all the provinces adjacent to Kábul.

The province of Ghazni was on the side of Kábul, and openly declared its hostility towards the English.

We have stated above that the Kohistáni chiefs, as soon as the English had occupied Kábul, appeared before General Roberts and promised their friendship. This it was in the highest degree important to obtain,

for, as a communication in the *Times*, dated Kábul 10th (22nd) October, represented, "*Kohistán is the chief centre of recruiting for the Amir's army.*"

The people of Kohistán prove hostile to the English.

Later on a report came from Simla, dated 7th (19th) September, confirming the news of the breaking out of an insurrection in Kohistán, and asserting that it had arisen because Yakúb-Khán had ordered one of the Kohistán chiefs to be executed, a considerable number of the Kábul rebels being natives of Kohistán. This report proved to be untrue, although in Kohistán, as in all other parts of Afghánistán, with the exception of Northern, an insurrection had arisen, but this was directed against the English alone.

A paragraph in the *Daily News* of 4th (16th) November communicated the news that Yusuf-Khán was at the head of the *rebel* party in Kohistán. Within three weeks some Kohistáni chiefs again appeared at Kábul, and once more declared their friendship.

After this, however, these same Kohistánis, in conjunction with the inhabitants of other parts of the Kábul plain and of the mountain valleys, made decided attacks on the English force.

It is remarkable to notice that the English authorities speak of these Kohistánis as "rebels," just as though they had even conquered them and taken possession of their country.

Let us now turn to the state of the Kábul Province prior to its occupation by the English troops and to the efforts made by General Roberts to set up an administration in the country.

An Afghán belonging to the upper class of Kábul arrived at Kandahar from that city and informed the English that the Amir had invited the Ghilzais to join in a holy war and had demanded reinforcements from Ghazni and from Bálkh. The English readily believed this baseless calumny.

Now, the Ghilzais occupy the entire country from the Shutur-Gardan to Kábul, and certain leaders of this powerful tribe had declared to General Roberts their readiness to assist any movement of English troops towards Kábul, and Roberts had entered into an arrangement with them.

On the 8th (20th) September news was received at Ali-Khel that a considerable force of Afghán regular troops, with a numerous artillery was concentrated at Kábul, that Yakúb-Khán had tried to induce them to disperse, but that he had not succeeded in doing so, and that these troops had imposed heavy contributions on the merchants of Kábul.

On the 10th (22nd) September reports came in representing that the military strength of Kábul comprised altogether about 5 battalions and 4 batteries, that the citadel of the town—the Bála-Hissár—was occupied by 3 battalions and 16 guns, that the battalions were weak and disorganised by cholera and desertion, and that, in all other probability, the English would meet with no opposition.

On the 18th (30th) September, the English received intelligence at Kushi to the effect that the inhabitants of Kábul had asked the Kohistán regiments whether they would fight against the English, and that these regiments had replied, "If the English come to Kohistán we will oppose them."

State of Kábul after the massacre of the British Mission.

The correspondent of the *Standard* telegraphed as follows:—"News has been received from Kábul that a general insurrection is going on there, and that the whole of the inhabitants of the city have joined the rebels. They have sent messengers to all the different tribes, inviting the whole country to take up arms. The news that two of the mutinous regiments have left Kábul is confirmed, but where they have gone is not known. This alone is certain, that they have not taken the road to the Shutur-Gardan. Since one of the regiments from the Kábul garrison consists of natives of Herát, it is supposed that this regiment has gone there in order to induce the people of that province to make common cause with the Kábulis. Up to the present time the news of the Kábul massacre has not excited any perceptible sensation amongst the tribes in the neighbourhood of the English force. This news spread so rapidly throughout India that of course the frontier tribes know all about it; still, in spite of a common danger there has been no outburst of fanaticism. Of the Amir there is no news; it is, therefore, supposed that he is in strict arrest and deprived of the possibility of communicating with us.

There is not a doubt but that all the Kábul regiments went over to the side of the party hostile to the English; but without leaders they did not know how to act.

Before he left Zargun-Shahr for Kábul, General Roberts on the 21st September (3rd October) issued the following proclamation to the inhabitants of the city:—

[Here follows a Russian translation of the proclamation.]

[Text resumed.]

Purport of General Roberts' proclamation to the inhabitants of Kábul, issued at Camp Zargun-Shahr.

Thus, according to the wording of this proclamation, those inhabitants of the city of Kábul who had joined the Afghán troops in fighting the English at the battle of Chár-Asiáb were held to be enemies of the British Government since the 24th September (6th October), and, further, this proclamation gave the Anglo-Indian troops the legal right to deal with the inhabitants of the Kábul plain as with persons who were without the law.

The bravely-conducted advance on Kábul was crowned with complete success, and, after the victory over the Afgháns at Chár-Asiab, the

Anglo-Indian force, led by Major-General Roberts, triumphantly entered the capital of the Amir of Kábul.

[General Soboleff in the next few pages gives an account, taken from English sources, of the occupation of the Bála-Hissár; also the text of General Roberts's speech on the occasion, and he further describes the triumphal entry of the English force into Kábul; the only thing which calls for any notice in the above is the stress which he lays on the presence in Kábul of Kátta-Turá, eldest son of the present Amir of Bukhára, and on the harsh treatment which he conceives Yakúb-Khán to have received from the date of his going to the English camp at Kushi.]

In another part of his narrative, General Soboleff mentions the "arrival at Jalálábád of the eldest son of the Amir of Bukhára, Sháh-Zádah-Sayad-Mansur, known in Central Asia under the name of Kátta-Turá. This is the same Kátta-Turá, who, in 1868, immediately after the famous Russian Expedition to Sámarkand, raised the standard of revolt against his father, the Amir, and who was totally defeated by the Russian troops under Major-General Abramoff. As Kátta-Túrá had now a suite of 140 persons, it would be very interesting to know what means he now had for existing and how he found it possible to travel about in such luxury and with so large a following?"

[Text resumed.]

General Roberts hoped that, with the occupation of Kábul, he would acquire such a moral ascendancy over the enemy that the country about it would settle down, and that the Afgháns would bow the head to the conqueror of their capital. These hopes were not destined to be fulfilled.

Commission of Inquiry.

Immediately after Kábul was occupied, General Roberts appointed a Commission of Inquiry, under the Presidentship of Colonel Macgregor, with Doctor Bellew * and Haiyát-Khán, a native, as members. To this Commission was entrusted the duty of minutely examining the evidence in connection with the murder of Major Cavagnari and his colleagues.

Military Judicial Commission.

A Military Judicial Commission, with Brigadier-General Massy as President, and Majors Moriarty and Hughes (?) as members, was nominated for the trial of prisoners suspected of rebellion against the English.

Both Commissions worked energetically, and on the 8th (20th) October the first executions took place at Kábul. On this date there were hung in front of the building which had been occupied by the members of the English Mission five men†, amongst whom was the head Mullah of the city, the Kotwál, two Afghán Generals, one Prince of the Blood (of the Duráni dynasty), and one watchman (*chaukidár*). The last-

* The author of the very interesting compilation entitled *Afghánistán and the Afgháns.—Author.*

† *Daily News*, No. 10459.—*Author.*

mentioned, according to the testimony of the witnesses before the Commission, carried Cavagnari's head* from the Embassy, and threw it on the market-place, where it was seized upon by the crowd, urged on by the Kotwál of the city. The crime of the chief Mullah was that he had preached a holy war against the English, and had blessed a standard which had been brought to him for the purpose by the Afgháns. By the orders of the same person the bodies of the slain men of the escort were thrown into the city ditch.

The charge against the Kotwál was that he had issued a proclamation which he had circulated throughout the city of Kábul, inviting all Mussulmáns to fight against the *unbelievers*. It was said to have been ascertained that the Kotwál had acted thus under the orders of Yakúb-Kháu himself, as delivered to him through Naik-Muhammad, Commander-in-Chief of the Afghán army, at the battle of Chár-Asiab. During these trials by General Massy's Commission, many of the inhabitants of the city were summoned as witnesses; but they gave their evidence very unwillingly, for, as the telegram to the *Daily News* went on to say, "*our stay here is considered doubtful.*"

The execution of these persons, who were greatly respected by the city populace, whose will they had only carried out, exasperated the Afgháns to the highest degree, and created in their minds the greatest hatred towards the uninvited foreigners. On the other hand, it shewed that the English had established a hasty and, as we shall see further on, an unrighteous tribunal.

The following extract from the *Daily News* on the subject of these executions is of extraordinary interest. This paper, which so thoroughly understood the position of the English at Kábul, pointed out how endless was the character of the Afghán complications, and how these executions and severities did but the more exasperate the already infuriated Afgháns.

Fresh executions followed those of the Kotwál and his four companions.

General Roberts's proclamation of the 11th (23rd) November 1879.

This severe General evidently began to arrive at some degree of knowledge that a system of executions, of enforced requisitions, the destruction and burning of villages, the merciless shooting of prisoners, had surpassed everything, had exasperated the people to the highest degree, and had increased their spirit of opposition. Accordingly on the 11th (23rd) November he issued a proclamation of amnesty in which he said that he had been informed that many Afgháns who had opposed his troops, had been led into error by the report that Yakúb-Khán was a prisoner in his camp.

* The bodies of Cavagnari and of his companions were not found at all.—*Author.*

We will let our readers judge for themselves as to the character of this proclamation, which the English called an amnesty.

This same proclamation in no way guaranteed the Afghán people from that terrible license which General Roberts had established by a system of terrifying and retaliation.

General Roberts's proclamation announcing an amnesty.

The military terror introduced into the country by General Roberts, and which was bound up with a system of intimidations and reprisals, led to results diametrically opposed to those imagined by the English.

As this system, in our opinion, was the chief cause of the terrible aversion of the Afghán people towards the English, and as we think it developed that *general longing for revenge* which found expression in the furious attacks on the Sherpur camp, we consider it necessary to make some observations on the course of action followed by the English at Kábul. But lest we should be reproached for prejudice and exaggeration, we shall be careful to indicate the sources whence we adduce our facts. We have already said that, in the course of General Roberts's march to Kábul, no quarter was given to any one found with arms in his hands, and all prisoners taken in battle were shot. During the late campaign we know, from the testimony of correspondents with the force, that the English commanders burnt the bodies of Afgháns who had been executed, with the exclusive object of depriving the natives of the right of supposing that they would enter paradise after death, for Mussulmáns believe that he who slays an *unbeliever* has a right to enter paradise; whereas he whose ashes are burnt is deprived of that right.

In the first Afghán war it is known that the English frequently burnt the bodies of Afgháns whom they captured in the fight. To the same inhuman practice, General Roberts's elated soldiers began to have recourse. (The London correspondent of the *Novoye Vremya*,* in a letter dated 5th (17th) November.) The same correspondent writes from London as follows:† Three Indian papers unite in testifying to the *frightful excesses* perpetrated by English soldiers on captured and wounded Afgháns, *excesses that were scarcely surpassed by those of the Bashi-Bazouks on wounded Russians.*

[In support of these charges the Lahore *Civil and Military Gazette* and the Bombay *Times of India* are quoted as authorities. Dr. Brown, too, is mentioned as a witness. Further on, extracts are given from the *Economist*, the Allahabad *Pioneer*, the *Standard*, and from an article by Mr. Frederick Harrison in the *Fortnightly Review*, in support of the charges of cruelty preferred against General Roberts's troops.]

We will not describe all the horrors which were perpetrated at Kábul and its neighbourhood, and which, in the opinion of the London jurist, Mr. Harrison, exceeded the *brutalities of the Báshi-Bazouks*, but we will

* No. 1332.—*Author.* † No. 1340.—*Author.*

refer our readers to the pages of the English newspapers which contain a mass of the most curious facts. We will only observe that the restraint of the Afgháns was exhausted, and the desire for a bloody revenge filled the minds of one and all amongst them.

From the date of the battle of Chár-Asiab there began a series of disturbing actions which only exasperated the Afgháns and prepared for the English *the siege of Sherpur*.

In England an entire party accused General Roberts of severity, and we find in the Parliamentary Papers relating to the Session of the 17th (29th) February 1879, published in London, a very long justification of his action. The accusation was comprised in the statement that by his orders the whole Afghán population of the Khost Valley had been made over to fire and sword, that he allowed the merciless and monstrous murder of ninety bound prisoners, and that he directed his cavalry to allow no quarter and to kill all prisoners. In his despatch in reply General Roberts frankly acknowledged the justice of all these charges. He admitted that by his orders four villages in the Khost valley had been plundered and burnt, that bound prisoners had really been killed, in consequence of an *intended* attack on the part of the enemy, and that on one occasion only had an order really been given to spare no one: but he added that from 30 to 40 men had been killed, and not 400, as the accusation alleged. General Roberts justified all these actions by military necessity. On the 26th April (8th May) 1879 the justification of General Roberts's course of action in the Khost valley was published at Simla.

The Commander-in-Chief recognised the course of action adopted by the General as well founded, and absolved all the accused persons in the affair.

Disarmament of the people in and around Kábul.

In order to weaken the power of the inhabitants, it was indispensable to disarm them.

To what an extent this disarmament was necessary may be seen from a statement made by a correspondent of the "*Times*" in a telegram dated Kábul, 7th (19th) October, to the effect that if a disarmament did not take place there would be constant *murders* in the English camp.

General Roberts's proclamation regarding the surrender of all arms was in the first instance attended with great success, for by the 6th (18th) October more than 1,000 fire-arms, with their appurtenances, were given up. Within a week the number of arms surrendered reached 4,000, and of these the greater part were breech-loaders. The arms so received were at once destroyed. All at once, however, the surrender of arms stopped, and the English were obliged to send out small bodies of men to *search* for them. The fact was that the impression produced by the battle of Chár-Asiáb was effaced by the Afghán successes on the Shutur-Gardan.

The result was that out of the 50,000 fire-arms which the inhabitants of the city of Kábul and its neighbourhood possessed, the English recovered altogether 6,000, leaving 44,000 in the hands of the populace.

At the same time that they searched for arms, the English undertook the collection of the taxes which were in arrears: and, of course, such proceeds were devoted exclusively to the use of the English themselves.

The authority of the English extended only to the city of Kábul and to those places actually held by their troops: in all the other parts of Eastern Afghánistán complete anarchy reigned.

The English strive to subdue the inhabitants of the Kábul valley.

In view of the approaching winter the English strove with all their might to crush the population and to make of it a passive instrument for their own rule. The personal character of General Roberts did not allow of any other action than that which works through intimidation. To this young General it appeared that his victory at Chár-Asiáb, his occupation of Kábul, the issue of several threatening proclamations, the destruction of the Bála-Hissár, the disarming of the populace, the enforced collection of taxes, the confiscation of the treasure which had been found, executions and tortures, the arrest of Yákub-Khán, who had voluntarily come into the English camp, and his banishment to India, that all these measures were perfectly sufficient to instil dread into the minds of the people and to insure obedience to the English.

At this time we should mention that General Roberts had incurred the greatest hatred and contempt on the part of the Afgháns; the dread which had at first been called forth amongst them he had misdirected, and it had now completely disappeared.

In connection with the report spread by the Kábul correspondent of the *Indian Herald* regarding an alleged attempt on the life of General Roberts, General Soboleff remarks—"We do not understand whence this alarming story proceeded."

Afghán public opinion.

Every right-minded man must be stirred by the egotism and injustice of the Anglo-Indian commanders, but what must have been the feeling of those against whom this injustice is directed? What must the Afgháns have felt? Unfortunately they were without those blessings possessed by civilised peoples. Their voice could not be heard! Their energetic protest could only be expressed by actions, and hence we can follow their desperate resolution to drive the English out of Kábul. The Afgháns were banded together for one idea, the freedom of their native land and their domestic hearths, and, being impelled by revenge and malice, they fiercely threw themselves on General Roberts's force. The proud conquerors of Kábul were then seized with a panic and shut themselves up in a fort.

We have stated above that, after the battle of Chár-Asiáb, the bulk

of the Afghán troops retreated towards Ghazni, and that a small proportion of them made their way to the Shutur-Gardan. The brilliant success attained by the Afgháns there obliged the English to clear out of the pass, and deprived them at the same time of their only line of communication with Pesháwar. The inspirited Afgháns, led by experienced chiefs, then came to a very wise decision; they resolved to first organise their forces before they entered upon a serious struggle. We have also mentioned that certain regiments which came from Afghán-Turkistán went to Ghazni, and that the Afgháns had a considerable number of fire-arms. The English, moreover, assert that they had also 123 pieces of ordnance.

Having good cadres, Muhammad-Ján began to actively form and drill his battalions. His men were provided with uniform and fire-arms, and the best Afghán officers were appointed to the several units. Cavalry as well as infantry were organized at Ghazni.

Here, then, is nearly all that we know regarding the organisation of the Afghan levies, which compelled an Anglo-Indian force to shut itself up behind entrenchments. These bands finally decided on joining forces to wrest Kábul from the English and to drive them out of the country.

By this time several bands of the populace had assembled, and had begun to arrange concerted action. Thus, the Ghazni levy had already occupied the Maidán valley, another had entered Kohistán, a third had gone to the Zaimusht country, and a fourth was in the Logar valley.

[Here is given an account of the dispositions made by General Roberts with a view to breaking up the combinations amongst the Afghán tribes.]

The Afgháns had gradually collected in the neighbourhood of Kábul, and had evinced a decided intention of advancing to the attack. The English commanders apparently had not yet placed before themselves a clear account of the true state of affairs, and they did not, therefore, recognise that the danger was so near: they, moreover, hoped to prevent in time any concentration of Afghán forces. General Roberts had been warned that the province of Ghazni was furnishing considerable forces, that regular regiments were collecting there, and that the road between Maimana and Ghazni was unsafe. But General Roberts, it seems, judging by his telegrams, did not wish to believe that his victory before Kábul and his occupation of that city had in reality only a slight importance in the eyes of the Afghán people.

The population of Kábul appeared to be quiet, but, according to the assurance of a correspondent of the *Standard* dated 17th (29th) October, it was restrained only through fear, and would rise immediately there appeared to be hope of doing so successfully. The hand which General Roberts had shewn did not suffice to reconcile the Afgháns to even a temporary occupation of Kábul. Although English reports from

that city stated that the harsh and merciless treatment which General Roberts and his comrades had pursued in respect of the Afgháns had produced an excellent effect on the people, and had quieted them, this was not the case. Notwithstanding, therefore, that the Afgháns had lost the battle before Kábul, and had been turned out of their capital, they had become inspirited by the Shutur-Gardan success and by the withdrawal of the English from that pass. They were too exasperated by the English treatment of the Amir, who had given himself up to them, and they at the same time saw that General Roberts's force was without transport, and consequently extremely immobile, and so they made further preparations to attack the English.

General Roberts, after assuming the functions of Amir of Kábul, sent his agents to the northern provinces of Afghánistán, and imagined it possible to induce the officials to preserve order in their respective jurisdictions, on behalf of the English. Soon, however, alarming rumours came in from the north side of the Hindu-Kush. A telegram dated Kábul, 7th (19th) November 1879, was published in the *Standard* stating that the Afghán troops in Turkistán had mutinied and had marched as far as the Bámián Pass with the intention of giving up their arms to the English authorities and of dispersing to their own homes. The news about the mutiny of the Afghán troops was confirmed by a telegram dated Calcutta 9th (21st) November which appeared in the *Times*. We have already seen, however, that there was no mutiny, but a movement of several battalions of infantry and of regiments of cavalry towards Kábul, with a view of increasing the fighting strength of the Afghán forces that were preparing to offer a resistance to the English before Kábul. We learnt that, owing to the bold march of General Roberts straight on Kábul, the Afghán plan of operations was thrown out, and that the Turkistán quota did not arrive in time; still, having once crossed the Hindu-Kush, these masses, being possessed of arms, went, some in the Kábul direction, others in the direction of Ghazni, and so considerably added to the number of the Afghán fighting-men, of whom Shir-Ali's General of artillery, the famous Muhammad-Ján, had assumed the chief command.

At the close of the year 1879 the *Russki Invalid* announced that a telegram had been received from Táshkand communicating the news that on the 23rd November (5th December) the Afghán Sirdárs, Naik-Muhammad-Khán, brother of the late Amir, and his cousin, Ghulám-Hussain-Khán, with a suite of eight men, had arrived there. The travellers had fled after the fight with the English before Kábul, and had come to seek Russian hospitality. Another telegram, dated 14th (26th) December, stated that the Afghán Sirdár, Abdul-Rahmán, who had asked permission to go and meet his kinsmen in the province of Farghána, had fled thence across the frontier.

Administration of Kábul.

The unsuccessful administration of the capital of Kábul, through the medium of an English General, induced General Roberts to abolish the post of Military Governor, and to entrust the government of the city to Sirdár Wali-Muhammad. This selection was a very unhappy one, because this Sirdár was extremely disliked by the inhabitants. During the first phase of the campaign, he had proved a traitor, and having fled to the English, he had represented himself to be one of the pretenders to the throne of Afghánistán.

General Roberts's desire to direct the administration of the different districts in the Kábul plain met with complete failure. But still he did not get depressed, and continued, as before, to send out in every direction his threatening orders. At first these orders were received very coldly, then their recipients grew weary of them, but when the tribes had assembled and had begun to be sensible of their own strength, General Roberts's threatening demands created merriment.

The organisation of the Afghán levies and the plan of their operations against the English were cleverly conceived. General Roberts himself might have been in error on the subject, but still his blindness is not comprehensible.

As we have seen, the projected expedition to Ghazni turned out a failure, and General Baker's detachment retired gradually on Kábul.

Popular insurrection throughout Afghánistán.

At length, General Roberts became convinced of the existence of an organized insurrection.

Every day there were affixed to the walls of the city of Kábul appeals, written in strong language, inciting all true believers to join in a holy war against the English. Under such circumstances General Roberts thought it prudent to strengthen the herpur Sposition, and to have built in the neighbourhood of the city twelve new forts and blockhouses. He also ordered it to be notified that all persons caught with arms in their hands within a radius of 5 miles of the English camp would be arrested.

We have already learnt that, under the name *rebels* must be understood Afgháns, who, with arms in their hands, had resolved to protect their independence from English violence, and that the word *severity* is synonymous with *military terror*, introduced immoderately by the energetic but harsh General Roberts. We have also seen that this same terror in no way awed the Afgháns, but rather the more enraged them, that it, moreover, served as the exciting cause in the formation of a powerful combination of Afghán tribes, headed by Muhammad-Ján, an Afghán General of artillery, and by the universally respected Mullah, Mushk-i-Alam.

The attitude of the people around Kábul had not excited special confidence in the English military leaders. Meanwhile, winter was drawing nigh, and it was of the utmost importance that proper winter quarters for the troops should be provided and everything necessary for winter consumption stored therein.

Although we also cannot deny that on General Roberts must fall the fate of responsibility, principally for his excessive self-confidence, yet the bulk of the blame is attributable to the Ministry of Lord Beaconsfield and to Lord Lytton. The London papers had by this time considerably lowered their tone. The *Times* counselled adherence to the clauses of the Treaty of Gandamak and the evacuation of Afghánistán as speedily as possible, leaving the Afgháns to themselves. The same paper declared that "the Ministry has no definite object in view." "In English society there was manifested an extreme disbelief in the official telegrams sent by the Viceroy and by General Roberts, and even in those of the correspondents of the several papers, because they were, it is well known, subjected to the strict censorship of Indian officials." With pique and the sense of unconcealed injury the *Times* wrote, "Kábul has slipped out of our hands, and its administration has passed from General Hills to Muhammad-Ján, *an insurgent.*" Other papers, giving themselves up to the same panic that had taken possession of the Ministry, expressed the opinion that the foreign relations of Great Britain were far from being such as to prevent the *fatal* position in Afghánistán from acting in the most unfavourable manner on Great Britain herself.

Combination throughout Afghánistán on the renewal of hostilities at the close of 1879 : Ghazni being the centre of opposition.

In the war of 1879-80, which we are now describing, a combination of Afghán tribes constituted a force with a threatening aspect. The centre of this force was the town of Ghazni, so famous in the history of Afghánistán. We have seen that this combination in December 1879 placed the English in a critical position, and we know that, in spite of the energetic exertions of the Kábul Field Force, of the troops on the line of communications extending along the course of the Kábul river to the Indian frontier, and subsequently of the aid afforded by General Stewart's force; this combination was not broken up, and that it still had to be reckoned with. Muhammad-Ján and Mushk-i-Alam, the leaders of this combination, were not amongst those with whom it would be an easy task to fight.

Ghulám-Hussain-Khán told General Roberts that never in the history of the Afghan people had there been such a powerful combination of tribes as was formed in December 1879.

This combination bore the character of a strictly democratic movement, for almost all the Sirdárs and representatives of the Afghán aristocracy went over to General Roberts, and took no part in assisting

Mushk-i-Alam and Muhammad-Ján. The only exceptions were Tahir-Khán and a few others of lesser note.

The services of Muhammad-Ján were very higly prized by the deceased Amir, Shir-Ali-Khán, as an excellent artillery officer who could not be spared from the ranks of the army. He commanded the Afghán artillery at Ali-Masjid in November 1878. English reports, describing that affair, speak of the excellent manner in which the Afghán artillery was handled, and even hint that it was worked under *European guidance*. After the retreat of the Afgháns from Ali-Masjid, Muhammad-Ján remained without employment, but Yakúb-Khán, when he succeeded to the throne of Kábul, promoted him to the rank of General, and gave him the command of three regiments. Muhammad-Ján commanded the Afghán army at Chár-Asiáb. We have seen, too, how skilfully he directed the retirement of his defeated forces on Ghazni, not allowing the enemy to scatter his troops.

Muhammad-Ján enjoyed great popularity amongst the Afghán soldiery, but was thoroughly hated by the Afghán Sirdárs. The latter circumstance did not trouble him, for they, to their shame, were in close communication with the English and abstained from taking part in the affairs of the people.

Muhammad-Ján was the very type of a popular warrior. With regard to his character we may mention that immediately after his victories over the English before Kábul, he wrote General Roberts a letter, in which he gave him plainly to understand that the Afgháns would continue the war until not a single Englishman remained within the limits of Afghán territory. This letter was sent off after the withdrawal of his army from Kábul and after the raising of the siege of Sherpur. When, too, the English were surrounded at Sherpur, Muhammad-Ján made the following demand to General Roberts: "The English troops must be withdrawn to India, with a promise to *restore Yakúb-Khán*; two English officers to be left behind as hostages."

The Mullah Mushk-i-Alam ("the fragrance of the world"), on account of his great sanctity, enjoyed the highest respect of the Afgháns. His real name was Din-Muhammad. He was an orthodox Mussulmán of Indian birth, but he had long lived at Ghazni, where he studied elementary theology. Subsequently, he finished a course of divinity under the guidance of Mullahs at Lunpanah (?), Pesháwar, and other places. He took part in the war against the Káfirs which was waged by Háji-Táj-Muhammad. During this campaign his leader was killed, and he conveyed the corpse with great reverence to the deceased's native-place, and then returned to Ghazni, where he assumed the calling of a teacher. The greater number of the Mullahs of the province of Ghazni were his pupils; so that he possessed great influence amongst the Ghilzais, Momands, and other tribes. At the time of which we are speaking he

was an old man. He bore a character for scrupulous honesty, and his course of action was frank and open. He was a bitter enemy of the English, whom he regarded as the enslaver of the Hindus and Indian Mussulmáns.

A very active part, too, in the organisation of this movement was taken by the wife of Yákhiya-Háji, who was sent to India after Yakúb-Khán. This Afghán lady, the daughter of the famous and well-to-be-remembered by the English, Akbar-Khán, hated the English and desired to have her revenge for the treatment of her husband, and so she spent two lakhs of rupees, in order to effect an alliance between the mountain tribes and the Afghán army, and to make their objects identical.

The English asserted that Yakúb-Khan's wife and mother also assisted the popular party. They reproached the deposed Amir for this, and imagined that if it was *permitted* them to take revenge on the Afghán people for the murder of the members of the Cavagnari Mission, the deposed Amir was *criminally* at fault for having near relatives who should dare to carry on intrigues against them.

Removal of Yakúb-Khán a political mistake.

From this we see that one of the principal causes of the Afghán attacks on General Roberts's force was the compulsory abdication of Yakúb-Khán and his banishment to India. As a faithful soldier, Muhammad-Ján demanded the restoration of his sovereign, to whom he had sworn an oath of allegiance. Personally he sought nothing except to fight with the accursed foes of his country (the English), who love to blacken their enemies, but they even could not find anything peculiar by means of which they could asperse his honour.

The deceased Amir's favourite wife directed all these intrigues. It is known that her son Abdulla-Ján, for several years prior to the outbreak of the Anglo-Afghán war, had been nominated by Shir-Ali-Khán as heir to the throne. The protest made on this subject by Yakúb-Khán caused a civil war, which ended in the arrest of the rebellious son. We know, too, that Abdulla-Ján died during the summer of 1878, and that Yakúb-Khán, as the lawful heir, became in February 1879 Amir of Afghánistán.

The death of Abdulla-Ján did not quiet this ambitious woman, for she clamoured, whilst her husband was yet alive, for the recognition of her son-in-law (as the husband of her daughter), Muhammad-Háshim-Khán, as heir to the Afghán throne.

The wife of the late Shir-Ali Khán, after the days of mourning for her husband were over, determined to leave nothing undone towards avenging his memory on the English, and with this object she entered into close relations with Ayub-Khán, the ruler of Herát. According to information received from Afghánistán, she hid in a safe place jewellery

and money left her by her husband, and she then expended them in carrying out the task which she had set herself.

Such were the principal personages who stood at the head of the popular movement against the English.

In making mention of the importance of the combination of the Afghán tribes, we should observe that Mushk-i-Alam and Muhammad-Ján used every endeavour to the end that there might be unity of action. This aim was, however, almost unattainable, as the several tribes, under the influence of historic causes, and especially through the circumstance that the Afghán Sirdárs were constantly fighting amongst themselves, and frequently with the Amir, could not therefore all at once get accustomed to the notion of pursuing one concerted line of action.

Thus we see that when the Ghazniites displayed passionate hatred to the English, the Kohistánis made their appearance in General Roberts's camp and entered into negotiations. The result of these *pour-parlers* was the appointment by the English of Sirdár Sharhdi-Khán (?) nephew of Dost-Muhammad, as Governor of Kohistán.

General Roberts sent message after message to the leaders of the popular party, endeavouring to gain them over to the side of the English. It now, too, became necessary to take steps to construct a Government of some kind. The English bitterly regretted that in the ranks of the Afghán aristocracy prominent personages were very scarce. It is necessary to here state that the late Amir Shir-Ali-Khán set aside a custom which had long obtained in Afghánistán, by force of which the chief administrative offices in the state were occupied by right of hereditary title. Shir-Ali appointed to such offices persons of the middle class, choosing for the purpose those who were most fitted. Thus, the majority of the Afghán Sirdárs took no part in State affairs, and that is the reason why so few of them are men of capability and with force of character. Their influence amongst the people is almost infinitesimal. In the English camp there were nearly all of the numerous kinsmen of Dost-Muhammad, beginning with his sons and ending with his great grandsons. All of these personages were possessed of but little ambition, but they were avaricious, jealous of each other, and full of intrigue. This circumstance, on the one hand, distressed the English, because it did not permit of their placing at the head of the Government of Afghánistán persons out of the crowd of Afghán Sirdárs who were devoted to them, but on the other it was to them a matter of rejoicing, in that it gave them abundant material for raillery and banter over the hated and dangerous Afghán nation.

Amongst the more prominent members of the Afghán aristocracy who joined General Roberts were the following: Wali-Muhammad, Shir-Ali's half-brother, Hassan-Khán, Yakúb-Khán's cousin, and the husband of the sister of Abdulla-Khán, who died in the autumn of 1878.

The English availed themselves of the services of these Sirdárs and rewarded them, by which means they raised against them the hatred of the entire Afghán people. And so, when the English thought of leaving Kábul, they had to face the question as to the fate of these Sirdárs.

The part played by Muhammad-Ján and by the Mullah Mushk-i-Alam, not only lost nothing from the fact that they were forsaken by the majority of the Afghán Sirdárs, but positively gained therefrom. The holding aloof of the Afghán Sirdárs from the combination of the tribes gave it cohesion and a thoroughly popular character. Amongst the number of the chief figures in this combination must be mentioned Mir-Batcha, head of the Kohistánis, and Asmat-Ullah, chief of the Lughmán Ghilzais. From January a prominent place amongst them was taken by Hassan-Khán, Governor of Jalálábád, who fled from that city and appeared at Ghazni. Soon after that he placed himself at the head of a small force and set out from Ghazni. His goal proved to be the Logar valley to the south of Kábul, where he endeavoured to once more raise the people against the English.

At this time also emissaries from Muhammad-Ján were with Mir-Batcha, with a view to inducing him to raise the Kohistánis. The Kohistánis were the most active allies of the Ghilzais. Their relations with the English were distinguished for a certain degree of irregularity, but, generally speaking, a hostile attitude prevailed. Our readers will remember that in the middle of December, immediately after the raising of the siege of Sherpur, General Baker tried to penetrate to Kohistán, but totally failed in doing so. Mir-Batcha slipped out of the danger, and did not appear when he was summoned by General Roberts to come to Kábul. For this reason his name was removed from the list of those persons, to whom, in the terms of General Roberts's December proclamation, an amnesty was extended.

On the 5th (17th) January the Kohistán plenipotentiaries went away from Kábul, leaving behind them several hostages. Some days afterwards, a letter from Muhammad-Ján was received in Kohistán, and in this it was stated that Ayub-Khán had marched from Herát, had defeated the English, and had occupied Kandahar. Muhammad-Ján proposed to the Kohistánis that they should recommence hostilities against the English. The Kohistánis answered that they would be ready to fight if the English came to their country; but they had no intention of renewing an attack on Sherpur during the winter season of the year. At the close of February disorders broke out in Kohistán, and the inhabitants once more joined the combination.

9.—Chapter in General Soboleff's work headed *The Reign of Military Terror.*

The Afgháns hated General Roberts with all their heart for his

severe treatment of them and for introducing a reign of military terror into Kábul. General Roberts would not regard the Afgháns as a nation having any sort of right to exist. Armed Afgháns, who held out for the independence of their native land, he stigmatised as *rebels, insurgents*, and even as *robbers*. All those who had served in the Amir's army and who had dared to oppose the English, he ordered to be arrested. These persons, under various pretexts, he shot by the score. Thus, during the last three days of October 1879, out of 89 Afgháns who were brought into the English camp, 49 were hung, 38 were released, and 2 were imprisoned.

During the autumn and winter of 1879-80 frequent expeditions were sent out from Kábul, and these destroyed villages, exacted taxes, and burnt the dwellings of the people. The harvest which the inhabitants had gathered was confiscated to the use of the English troops, and what they could not carry away with them they burnt.

General indignation took possession of the country, and the Afgháns determined to sell their independence dearly.

It should here be stated that, in the course of the Anglo-Afghán war, the rights of military correspondents were so circumscribed that they were forbidden to communicate anything that could cast an unfavourable shadow on the English operations in Afghánistán. Nevertheless, in England and also in Europe, facts came to be known through the medium of private letters, facts which could not but strike all who considered the English nation to be one of the most civilised and consequently the most humane. It was most unexpectedly revealed that the English did not consider themselves bound to follow any of the generally received decencies of civilised nations, for they hung peaceful citizens on suspicion alone, they hung or shot any Afgháns who dared to enter into open warfare with them, they burnt the bodies of the Afgháns whom they had hung, and openly jeered at the most sacred beliefs of the people.

Such a political disregard of all decency, and a manifest disdain of all the rules of war as observed by all *civilised* nations, stirred to the very depths the more healthy section of English society, and called forth several loud protests. Thus, towards the end of December 1879, the London Peace Society made the following appeal to the population of Great Britain.

[Here follows a translation of the manifesto referred to.]

To Lord Beaconsfield, as the First Minister of the Conservative Cabinet, was handed a copy of a memorial on the subject of General Roberts's severities. This memorial was signed by many influential persons in Great Britain, the first signature being that of the Duke of Westminster.

[Here follows the purport of the memorial alluded to.]

Those who are acquainted with the English system of administration in the colonies, will, doubtless, not be surprised at the infraction of rights of which the English authorities were guilty in the war which we are

describing. British India, Southern Africa, and other portions of our planet, wherein the English consider themselves masters, and wherein they seek their own gain, feel the entire weight of the *English yoke*. Even Ireland, one of the best corners of Europe, peopled by Christians, groans under English rule. The events of 1875—1878, which have marked a new era in the history of the Sláv race, have clearly shown to which side inclines that very powerful party in England known under the name of Conservative. This party would maintain the terror of Turkish dominion over the Sláv peoples, who are alien and hostile to Muhammadanism. The same party insults the name of Sláv, and considers those who bear it unworthy of a free existence. This unnatural attitude of a *civilised nation* to the Slávs, who inhabit the Balkán peninsula, is explained by the dread which the English have for Constantinople and for the route leading from Europe to their rich Indian possessions. The English imagine that the extension of the power of Russia in the Black Sea and in the Bosphorus would lessen the gains which they derive from India. Through the force of this fear do they range themselves on the side of the Turks, and declare themselves the open enemies of Slavonic independence. Wherever the commercial advantages of England are interfered with, Englishmen forget the interests of humanity. Their army, which is not distinguished for the discipline which obtains amongst the armies of the Continental powers, becomes a weapon in the hands of executioners.

[Here follow two articles taken from the *Novoye Vremya* of the 4th (16th) and 7th (19th) January, 1880, respectively, on the subject of excesses said to have been perpetrated by English soldiers in South Africa and in Afgháníst*á*n.]

[Text resumed.]

Particulars relating to the ugly deeds of the English army operating in South Africa became known only because of a certain degree of freedom allowed to newspaper correspondents in that part of the world. In Afgháníst*á*n scarcely any correspondents were allowed, and officers of the army were only permitted to send communications to the papers on condition that such were, first of all, submitted to strict censorship, and that the writers would be held responsible for any excess of frankness.

General Roberts at length saw that a system of terror did not bring in those fruits on which he had counted, and that the Afgháns were not possessed of that mildness of character which belongs to the Indian subjects of the Queen. He accordingly resolved to try softer measures, the more so because his system of military terror only exasperated the Afgháns.

The chief justification which General Roberts brought forward, in respect of the charges of cruelty preferred against him, was comprised in the statement that the Afgháns, in fighting against the English, fought also against the Amir, and, consequently, were *traitors*. This naive justification was met in the House of Commons with loud laughter. The Liberal Party, *i.e.*, the more healthy section of the British nation, seemed humiliated at the robber-like conduct of the Queen's

troops in a country where, above all, it was necessary to show a marked contrast between European civilisation and Asiatic barbarity.

In the manifestoes of the Indian Government, which were published in Calcutta during the month of February 1880, it was stated that rewards would be offered for the arrest of those who had fought against the English at Chár-Asiáb, because it had been ascertained that the Afghán regiments which had attacked the British Embassy had taken part also in the above battle. It is necessary to here remark that at the so-called *battle* of Chár-Asiáb, which was fought on the 24th September (6th October) 1879, 5,000 Anglo-Indian and 7,000 Afghán troops were ranged on either side. The system of military terror which the severe English General (Roberts) inaugurated at Kábul and the neighbourhood, had not attained its object, but rather had made the Afgháns still greater haters of the English. From February 1880 General Roberts became more humane, partly under the influence of the bitter reproaches of a considerable section of his own countrymen, but chiefly from the knowledge that blood-stained justice had not instilled into the minds of the Afgháns any notions regarding the power and strength of the English. On the contrary, it had revealed their weakness, for true power does not require useless expedients, and weakness alone is prone to severity. It is not by such means that dominion is reached in the East. Asiatics, too, are men, and they have become possessed of the conviction that *Russia is immeasurably stronger than England.* After conquering the country (India), Russia would leave the people, their religion, and their customs and would at the same time recognise that they are men. England, on the other hand, regards all Natives as beings of an inferior race. She disdains to descend to their level, and looks upon them as fit subjects for fleecing.

Part taken in the war against the English by Abdul-Rahmán and Ayúb-Khán respectively.

But a change was coming over the position of the English in Afghánistán, for from behind the snow peaks of the Hindu-Kush was moving an army at the head of which was the famous Abdul-Rahmán, who was firmly resolved to procure the independence of his native land. At Herát, too, there was ready to march an army led by Sirdár Ayúb-Khán, brother of the arrested Amir. Both these personages, Abdul-Rahmán and Ayúb, had one and the same object, that was, to drive the unbidden and hated English out of the limits of Afghánistán.

The first essayed to fulfil his object by diplomacy with the English authorities, and in order that his endeavours to this end might have weight, he collected an army and entered into active communication with Kohistán, Kábul, and Ghazni. The second had no desire at all to conduct any negotiations, as he had no faith in the honour of British Politicals. It was his aim, therefore, by trusting to a well-equipped army and to the people, to defeat the English in the field, to take Kandahar, and to forcibly eject his enemies from Southern Afghánistán.

The turn had in fact come for both Afghán-Turkistán and Herát.

Up to the present time it has not been thoroughly explained whether these two famous Afgháns were acting in concert or whether each entered upon a line of action on his own account.

The idea was once again formed that Ayúb-Khán had acted in concert with Abdul-Rahmán. We do not know whether this corresponds with the truth, or whether the statement belongs to the number of English conjectures; but one of the earliest reports of the kind we meet with is in a telegram from the St. Petersburg correspondent of the *Daily News*, dated 1st (13th) August, in which it is said, "There is serious reason for thinking that Ayúb-Khán acted in concert with Abdul-Rahmán and was supported by him."

Abdul-Rahmán and Ayúb-Khán *not* in accord.

On the 4th (16th) August the Marquis of Hartington, in replying to Mr. Cowen in the House of Commons, said, "Whatever might have been the agreement which existed between Abdul-Rahmán and Ayúb-Khán, I think that now there is no sort of agreement between them, because their respective interests are in opposition, the one to the other."

After this declaration, the St. Petersburg correspondent of the *Daily News* said he adhered to his former statement that the two Sirdárs *were* in accord, and he asserted that he had received his information from a trustworthy source. The correspondent of the *Standard* also said that he had read of the alliance between the two Afghán Sirdárs in the *Turkistán Gazette*. When this news was sent to London by Englishmen in St. Petersburg, a very disagreeable impression was produced in the English capital. "At present," writes a London correspondent on the 14th (26th) August, "I am not in a position to say anything authentic as to the source of this exceedingly strange report. Everything relating to Afgháuistán is so untrustworthy that many, no doubt, will read this news as though it were worthy of credence. But if it really be confirmed, the difficulty of the situation is, of course, growing terribly apace. Whether this be so or not, every well-wisher of England impatiently awaits the moment when we shall finally find a way out of this Afghán interference."

The English began to suspect Abdul-Rahmán of cunning; and although they never declared this openly, they put off the time for the evacuation of the country.

When the Maiwand defeat had been avenged and General Roberts's troops had arrived at Kandahar, the English put away their alarm and recognised that the new Amir really was their well-wisher. The Simla correspondent of the *Times*, in a telegram dated 31st August (12th September) sent word:—"The assurances of certain Russian and English papers to the effect that there is any sort of agreement between the Amir and Ayub, are perfectly untrue. The former has throughout opposed the latter. The news of the St. Petersburg correspondent of

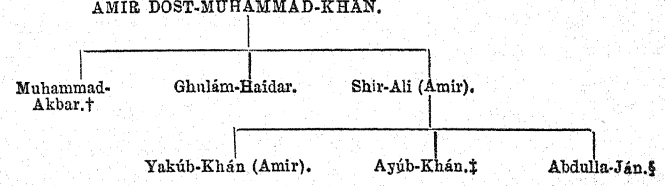
one of our contemporaries that the two Sirdárs met at Mazár-i-Sharif, is absurd. Ayúb never once quitted Herát during the whole time that Abdul-Rahmán was in Turkistán."

Finally, the Simla correspondent of the same paper on the 15th (27th) September, reported as follows: "There never was a shadow of ground for the rumour which was in circulation that between the Amir and Ayúb-Khán there existed a secret agreement. Those who credited this kind of report only displayed their ignorance of Afghán affairs. The news came to us from Europe or was manufactured in the bazaars of India, and was absurdly wide of the mark. We have been told that Ayúb and Abdul-Rahmán met in Turkistán, at Maimana, or some other place, to settle a joint programme. The truth is that Abdul-Rahmán Khán never went a mile to the west of Khanábád, and that, so long as he was in Turkistán, his rival Ayúb never quitted Herát at all."

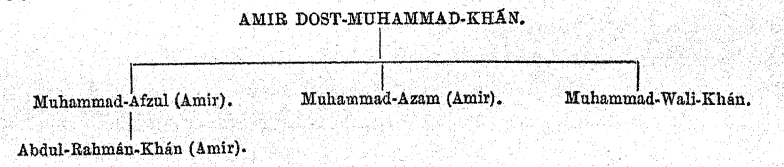
10.—Sirdár Abdul-Rahmán. Sketch of his life previous to his becoming Amir of Afghánistán, as written by himself.

The Afghán Sirdár, Abdul-Rahmán is the son of Muhammad-Afzul and the grandson of Dost-Muhammad-Khán. His mother was the daughter of a Bangash Sirdár. Shir-Ali-Khan, the late Amir of Afghánistán, as the consanguineous brother of Muhammad-Afzul, was Abdul-Rahmán's uncle.

The relationship of Abdul-Rahmán to the two last Amirs of Afghánistán, Shir-Ali and Yakúb-Khán, can be seen by a reference to the subjoined tables—*



The following genealogy is traced from Dost-Muhammad's favourite wife:—



* We have taken these tables, with certain modifications, from the splendid work of Mr. M. A. Terentieff, entitled *Russia and England in Central Asia*. St. Petersburg, 1875.—*Author*. (Translated by F. C. Daukes, Esq., B.C.S., Foreign Department Press, Calcutta.—(W. E. G.)

† He who destroyed the Anglo-Indian army in 1841.—*Author*.

‡ The ruler of Herát.—*Author*.

§ Shir-Ali's favourite son whom he had destined to be his heir. He died in 1878.—*Author*.

Abdul-Rahmán was born in 1844. The death of his grandfather, Dost-Muhammad, caused the rapid entry of the youth of 19 upon a political career.

When at Sámarkand, the author of this work used very often to see Abdul-Rahmán, and to hear from his lips many interesting stories relating to the more recent history of Afghánistán. The Sirdár loved especially to dwell on the history of his struggle with Shir-Ali. Of his grandfather he held no high opinion, and attributed his successes to the misfortunes of his father and his father's brother, Muhammad-Azam.

We will not hereby convey to our readers all that we heard from Abdul-Rahmán, for that would cause us to digress greatly, and might, perhaps, lead us into involuntary mistakes. But we consider it not superfluous to here insert a translation from the Persian of the author's auto-biography which he wrote at Sámarkand and which he presented to the Governor-General of Russian-Turkistán.

History of Afghánistán in modern times, written by Sirdár Abdul-Rahmán-Khán.

"Sirdár Sultan-Ahmad-Khán, the son of Sirdár Muhammad-Azam-Khán, and the father of Iskandar-Khán,* received from the late Amir Dost-Muhammad-Khán a pension, in addition to a grant of land. All at once, however, he became dissatisfied with Dost-Muhammad, and supposing that he could get the same position anywhere, he started off with his wife, who was a daughter of Dost-Muhammad, to Teherán. Whilst there, Sháh Nasir-Eddin made him Governor of Herát, and he lived there quietly for four or five years. After that he took it into his head to enter upon a war with Dost-Muhammad, and so he started for Farrah, a town which is situated between Herát and Kandahar.

"This he besieged and soon captured. When the news of this reached Dost-Muhammad at Kábul, he at once collected a force, and, putting himself at its head, marched upon Farrah. Suffice it to say that Sultán-Ahmad, not being in a position to oppose the force marching against him, fled from Farrah and returned to Herát. Here Dost-Muhammad followed him. Sultán-Ahmad, seeing no way of escape, shut himself up in the fortress, where he died during the siege. Herát fell after being invested for 11 months.

"Sirdár Sháh-Nawáz-Khán, Iskandar-Khán, and Sirdár Muhammad-Omar-Khán, who was Iskandar-Khán's grandfather, were all thrown into prison. Dost-Muhammad himself died 13 days after he had captured Herát. Whilst he was yet at Herát, the Amir, Shir-Ali, conceived the bad intention of seizing all his brothers and casting them into prison.

* He passed over with an Afghán detachment into Russian-Turkistán, and subsequently became a Lieutenant-Colonel in the Russian service. He afterwards quitted Russia and went over to the English, who would have nothing to say to him. He is now in Persia.—*Author.*

The Amir, Muhammad-Azam-Khán and Sirdár Muhammad-Aslam-Khán fled from Herát to those towns which had been conferred on them by Dost-Muhammad. Shir-Ali then left his son, Muhammad-Yakúb-Khán, at Herát and returned to Kábul. My father, the Amir, Muhammad-Afzul-Khán, who had been for eleven years ruler of Bálkh, received a letter from his brothers, the Amir, Muhammad-Azam Khán and Sirdár Muhammad-Aslam-Khán, to say that the rest of his brothers had raised the standard of revolt, but that as he was the eldest brother, they would obey him; that he could put an end to the enmity which had arisen amongst all the brothers, so that there should no longer be even the shadow of disagreement. Muhammad-Afzul thereupon wrote a letter and despatched it to his brothers, in which he said that if they anywhere began to make disturbances he would most certainly punish them, wherever they might be. My uncles listened to the words of my father and remained quiet at the places which had been conferred upon them. When, however, communication with Bálkh became interrupted, on account of the heavy falls of snow in the mountains, Shir-Ali marched his troops against my uncles and deprived them of their possessions.

"In the spring of 1873, when the road between Kábul and Bálkh became clear of snow, Shir-Ali marched against my father. My father, at the head of 20,000 men, advanced to meet him, and awaited his arrival on the mountain of Baj-Gákh, which marks the boundary of Bálkh territory. Shir-Ali approached, however, from another direction. A fight took place in which the losses on both sides amounted to between 2,000 and 3,000 men. The engagement lasted till the time of the evening prayer, when both forces drew off to their respective camps. In the course of two or three days, the Amir, Shir-Ali-Khán, sent out from his camp white-bearded old men, bearing the Kurán and the conditions under which Dost-Muhammad had made Bálkh over to my father Afzul-Khán, and he sent at the same time a letter in which it was stated that if he, the writer, should raise the people against his brothers, then might the Kurán be against him, and might bad prayers be offered up throughout the world against him. Afzul-Khán then had an interview with Shir-Ali, after which he directed his troops to return to Bálkh, telling them that he was going to remain two or three days with his brother. After two days the Amir, Shir-Ali Khán, told my father that he would take his troops to Kábul by the Guri route, *i.e.*, through my father's territory, because, as he said, the Hazára road was without supplies of forage, whilst along the Guri road there was forage enough for an army. My father, seeing the justice of the reason given, replied, "Very good, you can go that way." Accordingly the Amir, Shir-Ali, accompanied by my father, marched his troops towards the town of Aibak.*

* In our maps Haibak.—*Author.*

"At Aibak Shir-Ali-Khán conceived the notion of performing a pilgrimage to Ali's tomb, and he, therefore, set out for Tásh-Kurgán. From here, accompanied by my father, he paid his respects at the burial-place of the named Saint, staying there the whole of one night. The party then returned, my father going alone, as Shir-Ali's guest, to Tásh-Kurgán, whence he was to have returned home. When, however, they arrived at Tásh-Kurgán, Shir-Ali forgot his oaths on the Kurán and broke the terms of the treaty of peace, for he thrust my father into prison. At this time I was at Takhtapul,* where is the residence of the ruler of Bálkh. Here the news reached me of my father's incarceration. I at once collected a force with the object of destroying Shir-Ali. At this time a letter reached me purporting to be from my father. It said that if I was his son, I was, with trust in God, to quit Bálkh in any direction. The Kurán, on which Shir-Ali had sworn, was at the same time sent to me. Agreeably to what I thought was my father's order, as the road into Afghánistán was closed to me, I swam across the Amu-Daria and turned my head towards Bukhára.

"In the spring of 1864 the Amir, Shir-Ali-Khán, appointed Fatteh-Muhammad-Khán Governor of Bálkh, whilst he himself quieted the country in the space of three or four months. Then, after leaving an army at Bálkh, he set out for Kábul, taking away my father and his family as prisoners.

"Winter at Kábul was by this time at an end. In the spring Shir-Ali, with my father, Sirdár Sháh-Nawáz-Khán, Iskandar-Khán, and Muhammad-Omar-Khán, who were also prisoners, moved towards Kandahar against Sirdár Muhammad-Khán, who was Shir-Ali's cousin.

"Shir-Ali left his son, Muhammad-Ibrahim-Khán as Governor of Kábul. A fight took place close to Khelát-i-Ghilzai, during which the loss was great on both sides. Sirdár Muhammad-Amin-Khán and Sirdár Muhammad-Ali-Khán, Shir-Ali's son, were amongst the slain. As, therefore, Muhammad-Amin, the Governor of Kandahar, had been killed, all his possessions passed into the hands of Shir-Ali. I, who had during a period of eleven months reposed trust in God, left Bukhára with 200 horsemen and proceeded along the Shirábád road, coming out at the town of Akcha, which had been bestowed on my uncle, Faiz-Muhammad-Khán, by my father. After consulting my uncle, I went to Bálkh, from which, by the favour of the Most High, Fatteh-Muhammad-Khán, the ruler, fled to Guri.† After setting up here my own administration, I sent for Faiz-Muhammad from Akcha, and leaving him at Takhtapul, I marched with 12,000 men to Guri (Gori). When I drew near to this town, Fatteh-Muhammad fled thence towards Bukhára. Having set up my own administration at Guri, I wrote conciliatory letters to important

* Near Mazár-i-Sharif, on the road to Bálkh.—*Author.*
† On our maps Gori.—*Author.*

personages at Kábul, and then, with God's protection, turned my own face in the same direction. Shir-Ali, on hearing of all these occurrences, despatched to his son at Kábul his whole army, with its artillery and commanders.

"As soon as I approached Kábul the important personages of the city came out to pay their respects to me, and I laid siege to the place. The investment of the city had lasted ten days when Muhammad-Ibrahim-Khán, Shir-Ali's son, came out and surrendered the place to me. This occurred during the winter of 1865-66. I sent Muhammad-Ibrahim-Khán to his father. As soon as he reached Kandahar, Shir-Ali, with my father and Sháh-Nawáz-Khán, Iskandar-Khán, Muhammad-Omar-Khán, who were all prisoners together, set out for Kábul. When I heard of their coming, I took my troops out four marches beyond the city to meet them, leaving my uncle in charge of Kábul. A fight took place at Saya-ábád, which lies between Ghazni and Kábul. The mercy of God was so great that Shir-Ali was defeated, and my father and his fellow-prisoners, who were in charge of a guard of 200 men, having heard at Ghazni of my victory, escaped. This was in the spring of 1866. Shir-Ali fled back to Kandahar. I brought my father to Kábul, where I placed him on the throne of the Amirs. News then reached us that Shir-Ali-Khán was collecting a large army, equipped with about 20 guns, and was making every preparation for the carrying on of the war. At the same time Shir-Ali was constantly sending letters to the magnates of Kábul. Having duly considered the matter, I, in company with my uncle, Muhammad-Azam, marched towards Kandahar.

"Shir-Ali engaged in a battle with us near Khelát-i-Ghilzai. Prior to this I had made over to Iskandar-Khán 200 horsemen, letters, and some Hazáras, in the full assurance that he would march on Herát, according to his own expressed wishes. But when he was half-way there, he fled to Shir-Ali at Kandahar, and, having come to terms with him, took part against me in the fight near Khelát-i-Ghilzai. God being on my side, Shir-Ali was again defeated, and my forces occupied Kandahar in the autumn of 1866. Shir-Ali now fled to Herát. My troops remained at Kandahar for two or three months, during which time Shir-Ali sent an envoy from Herát to Faiz-Muhammad at Bálkh. He also made much of him, holding out great hopes, and even going so far as to conclude a treaty with him. After this Shir-Ali went in person from Herát to Bálkh. I subsequently learnt that the united forces of Shir-Ali and of Faiz-Muhammad-Khán were marching on Kábul. My father gave my cousin, Muhammad-Sarwár-Khán, son of my uncle Muhammad-Azam, the command of a force of 6,000 men, and directed him to march towards Bálkh. Muhammad-Sarwár-Khán, having got as far as Baj-Gákh, half-way between Kábul and Bálkh, met the enemy's forces, engaged them, and, being defeated, returned to Kábul. At this time a letter reached me

at Kandahar from my father bidding me hasten back to Kábul. Leaving my uncle at Kandahar, in the spring of 1867, I marched my troops and artillery on Kábul, which I reached in six days. Hearing of my approach, Faiz-Muhammad halted for two or three months, and then, after the completion of his preparations, and on the receipt of Shir-Ali's consent, attacked Kábul from the Panj-Sher direction, that is, on the road leading to Kábul from Guri. At the time that the news of Faiz-Muhammad's advance reached Kábul, my father was very ill. Placing my trust in God, I wrote a letter to my uncle at Kandahar, telling him that Shir-Ali, Faiz-Muhammad, and Muhammad-Ibrahim, were approaching Kábul from two sides, the two former along the Panj-Sher road, the latter by the Bámián route. I went on to say that I was going to lead my troops against the Panj-Sher force, and that I would send my lieutenants to engage the Bámián portion of the enemy, that my father was ill, and that he, having left his son at Kandahar, was to march at the head of his troops at once on Kábul. Leaving my sick father, I then advanced against the enemy. When I reached the Panj-Sher Pass, I met the troops and guns of Shir-Ali and of Faiz-Muhammad. The fight which ensued lasted from early morning until the hour of evening prayer, in a word till Faiz-Muhammad had been killed by the fire of my guns. Shir-Ali hereupon took to flight and did not stop until he had reached Bálkh.

"On my return to Kábul, my father was still unwell. At this time my uncle reached Kábul from Kandahar. Three days after my return my father died, and I was then occupied in his burial and in offering up prayers for the dead. News reached me during these ceremonies that Shir-Ali was fortifying himself at Bálkh. Having proclaimed my uncle Amir of Kábul,* I marched on Bálkh at the head of 20,000 men. After marching half the distance I received the news that Shir-Ali had fled *viâ* Maimana to Herát. As I wished extremely to come across Shir-Ali, I sent after him, but the Bálkh Uzbaks shut themselves up in Akcha and Minglik. The latter place I attacked and took. Leaving 600 Uzbaks there, I marched towards Maimana, which would not surrender. I then laid siege to it for the space of two months, after which the inhabitants, who desired to be left alone, came out with the Kurán, and concluded a peace†, by the terms of which they undertook to surrender all their guns and to pay an indemnity of 25,000 *tillas*.‡ They further agreed to be my friends and servants for all time. At this period there appeared on the frontiers of Maimana two Bukháran envoys, whose ostensible object in coming was to condole with me on the occasion of my father's death,

* This is a remarkable trait in Abdul-Rahmán's character, for on the death of his father, he might easily have proclaimed himself Amir, but he scrupulously adhered to the law of primogeniture. Eye-witnesses relate how extraordinarily effective was the scene when Abdul-Rahmán proclaimed his uncle Amir, and handed to him the sword of honour, the badge of authority.—*Author.*

† April 1868.—*Author.*

‡ A golden coin of the value of about 8 shillings.—*Author.*

but whose secret mission was to ask of me the services of 12,000 men, in return for which assistance they informed me I might ask for any towns I pleased, since their master was then waging war with the White Tsár. I answered the Bukháran envoys that I was myself a seeker after the friendship of the White Tsár, and that I would not give their master the troops which he had asked me for through them. All this time I had an extraordinary desire to send to the country of the White Tsár a trustworthy man, but since the road thither lay through the territory of the Amir of Bukhára such a notable envoy would not be allowed to pass. But in order to give expression to my friendly sentiments towards the Governor General of Russian-Turkistán, I despatched one of my personal attendants, by name Sayad-Muhammad, so that you might be informed concerning me, and how I considered my own affairs bound up with the interests of the territory of the White Tsár. From Maimana I returned to Takhtapul, whence I dismissed the Bukháran envoys. When Shir-Ali heard at Herát that I had left Maimana, he went with an army to Kandahar and took it. I could not send any one to the Russians with news of this, and so I went to Kábul. When I reached Guri I heard that my uncle had been defeated at Kábul. At a council of my commanders it was decided that I should at once go to Kábul, and I did so accordingly.

"In the month of August 1868 news reached me when I had got back half-way to Kábul that Shir-Ali had submitted himself to the English, and had concluded with them a treaty, according to the terms of which they were to pay him yearly the sum of 5,00,000 Indian rupees, and this they speedily did. Half the amount had been received by Shir-Ali before the news of this agreement reached me, and the other half was on its way. With this allowance Shir-Ali began to pay his troops, and the report that he was doing so soon spread through the country. About this time I arrived with my troops at the town of Ghazni, and, having pitched my camp 3 *farsakhs* (4 to 5 miles) from the city walls, surrounded the place with my troops. On the fourth day a large army under Sirdár Fatteh-Muhammad-Khán arrived to relieve Ghazni. I sent out against this force several commanders, with artillery and troops of other arms. A fight took place which lasted for three hours, when the enemy was beaten and 400 prisoners were brought to me. After that Muhammad-Ismail-Khán came with a large force. Against him also I sent out my commanders, who succeeded in capturing two guns and about 1,000 prisoners.

"It was the will of God that at this time there should have been in the fortress of Zanekhan 1,000 of Shir-Ali's infantry, and outside 300 of my own. My people sent word to me to ask that I would give them two guns, and a few more men; otherwise, they would be taken prisoners, as they had no artillery.

"At noon I sent off 2,000 men and six guns. An interval of two *farsakhs* (3 to 4 miles) divided us, and it was only at the hour of evening prayer that I hastened to them, as the snow reached up to the knees of the horses, and it was very cold. The whole night I caused my artillery to play on the walls of the fort until they had all fallen. In the morning, when the fortress was almost in a state of ruin, Shir-Ali arrived with the main body of his force. I reflected that if I withdrew my men I should most certainly be defeated, and I therefore remained where I was, sending mounted men to bring up the remainder of my troops. We held out till mid-day. Several of my chief officers had been killed, and still no assistance arrived. My uncle who was with my main body did not make his appearance. I saw that I should be taken prisoner, and I therefore fled with three-fourths of my men. I could not make my way to my main body, as communication had been cut off. Therefore, against my will I was obliged to hide myself for two days and nights in the Afghán mountains.* I was joined by my uncle Muhammad-Azam in the Waziri country. There we remained for twelve days, when we despatched to you (the Russians) a respected Háji, and busied ourselves in searching out a road for ourselves. At length we ascertained that through Bajour, Swát, and Badákhshán we could get to the territory of the White Tsár. I wrote a letter to the English, asking them to allow me to pass through their territory. The despatch of this letter was prompted by the desire to obtain from certain wealthy personages a loan, but when the English heard of this they would not permit my agent to negotiate any loan. They answered my letter by saying that I was to regard their country as my own, and all that I required they would give me, only that, once having accepted an asylum with them, I should never be allowed to return to Afghánistán.

"The man who brought me this reply related how that Shir-Ali had been to see the English authorities, and he described the friendship which had been established between him and them.

"Then I remembered how great is the friendship between Persia and Russia, and I resolved to go to the Sháh's dominions. It cost me much trouble and discomfort to take my way through the mountain portion of Afghánistán to Holy Mashad. The Governor of that city received me with extreme kindness, and I stayed there for 1½ months. Meanwhile I received a letter from Kábul from my friends and important personages, in which I learnt that Shir-Ali had concluded the following friendly agreement with the English: (1) to despatch to India all suspected members of the Kábul aristocracy; (2) to carry out a general disarmament; (3) to enrol a fresh army of 40,000 men, so that both Bálkh and Herát might be garrisoned with a view to opposing any possible attack of the

* This was in November or December 1868.—*Author.*

Russians; this army was to be composed of infantry and cavalry, and no other regular troops were to be maintained. If the Amir was not able to arrange this it was to be supposed that he was not fit to reign. Shir-Ali agreed to all this, and concluded a friendly compact. In return, he was to be given 12 guns, 6,000 rupees, and as much more money as he asked for. Rifle and cannon-founders from India were at work daily at Kábul. This was the kind of agreement he came to with the English, and when he left India to return to Kábul an English agent accompanied him. Whatever money he required for the maintenance of his troops, the English agent paid him. When, therefore, Shir-Ali returned to Kábul in the spring of 1869, the first thing he did was to order all his subjects to surrender their arms; those that were given up were valued and paid for, and to all the enrolled soldiers arms were furnished at the expense of the State. Five days afterwards Shir-Ali issued a strict order that every weapon in the country was to be given up, but the Afgháns would not surrender their arms. When, therefore, Shir-Ali saw that there was no possibility of collecting the arms of the population, he allowed his order to remain a dead letter. He then went on to the question of banishing the restless portion of his subjects, and having seized from ten to fifteen men he exiled them. After that the money grants of certain cavalry retainers were confiscated, so that old and young alike saw that the English desired through Shir-Ali to take from us the price of the English blood which we had shed. Every one became depressed; the Ghilzai and Kohistáni chiefs settled amongst themselves that they would not pay their respects to Shir-Ali. Furthermore Mir-Alam-Khán of Gutuk and several of the Sulaimán-Khels, Tukhis and Tereks, having joined forces, twice attacked Shir-Ali's troops. Much blood was shed, both of the inhabitants of the country and of the troops. The Afgháns to this day are convinced that, as they destroyed an English Army in 1841, there can be neither friendship nor peace between the English and Shir-Ali-Khán, so that their sincere desire is to be on friendly terms with the White Tsár if only they could hope for any kind of support from him. When I was at Mashad I received a letter from Sháh Nasr-Eddin, inviting me to go to Teherán. On receipt of this, I conferred with my uncle with a view to his going to Teherán alone, because there is a plenipotentiary of the White Tsár with whom he could endeavour to establish friendly relations. I, on my part, expressed the desire, having previously sent a man to Sámarkand, and having left guns and troops at Bálkh, to go to Bukhára in order to obtain information regarding the force which I had left at Bálkh and also to be nearer to Bálkh and Afgháníst án. Whilst I was at Mashad, I addressed a letter to Your Excellency. This letter should have been handed to you by my respected Háji. After this my uncle started for Teherán, and I, having engaged a good guide, and placing my trust in God, set out for Khiva, which I

reached after a journey of 40 days. From Khiva I sent you a second letter which was no doubt handed to you by my respected Háji. I stayed at Khiva for twenty days, enjoying great favours and studying the perfections of the Khivan administration. The Khán of Khiva is a young man of 25; his Prime Minister is a Ghilzai. I saw at Khiva about 15,000 prisoners, comprising Afgháns, Persians, and men of various other races. They are extraordinarily over-burdened with work, and they came to me to complain and to say that if an army were to arrive in the country from any direction, they would make over all the Khivans and so be released from slavery and restored to their respective countries. After twenty days I left Khiva. As there is no other road but that which lies through Bukhára, and as I believed the Amir of the country to be the friend of the White Tsár, I directed my route accordingly, arriving at Bukhára in fifteen days. From there I sent you another letter. In five days' time a man came to me from the Amir to say that his master desired to see me. Believing him to be the devoted slave of the White Tsár I went to the court of the Amir. On my arrival at Kárshi I sent off letters to the Mir of Maimana, who was on terms of friendship with me, and to the Mir of Shibirkhán, who is my kinsman, to the Turkumáns dwelling in 20,000 *kibitkas*, to the Mir of Sar-i-pul, to Muhammad-Khán and to Afgháns of note living at Bálkh, a letter to each, and then I started off to see the Amir of Bukhára, who was staying at Hissár. I saw and conversed with him. During my stay with him I perceived that he was trying to gain favour in both directions (the Russian and the Afghán), but his special solicitude was to prefer his own interests, for he twice sent from Hissár envoys to Shir-Ali.

"During the time that I was at Hissár, he sent off Abdul-Karim-*Toksába* with presents for Shir-Ali. To him also came an envoy bearing a letter and presents from Shir-Ali, the letter contained an expression of perfect friendship between the two States.

"At this time I wrote the Amir a letter to say how much I wished to arrive at the end of my journeying and to go to you. When the Amir had read my letter he asked my servant, "with what is the Sirdár dissatisfied? I will give him troops and guns and money to whatever extent he wishes, and I will carry out everything he desires; let him come with me to Kárshi; there I will let him go with troops and guns." I reflected that Kárshi is closer to Sámarkand, and that thence it would be possible for me to get to the territory of the White Tsár. On arrival at Kárshi I wished to go to you without the Amir's permission. I then thought over the matter and sent a letter to Hissár with an intimation that if in ten days' time the Amir would not let me go, you would send for me.

"When I reached Bukhára I received letters from all sides, *viz.*, from the Mirs of Maimana, Shibirkhán and of Sar-i-pul. These letters made

me very cheerful. They informed me that if I would come to the Amu-Daria they would await me with impatience, that the Most High God would enable me to accomplish the most difficult business, and that their property and troops were all at my service. I wrote to each an answer, and made it over to the persons who had brought me these welcome letters for delivery. I said that I was going to the Governor-General of Russian-Turkistán at Sámarkand, and that if God thought fit he would accede to all my wishes and requests: that I would then return, and that they were to remain quiet in expectation of my coming."

In the end of July 1869 there appeared at Sámarkand one of Abdul-Rahmán's kinsmen and asked that this Sirdár might be allowed to come there with his suite. General Aide-de-camp Von Kaufmann 1st gave Abdul-Rahmán to understand that if he would pay his respects* to himself at some appointed place, hospitality would not be denied him, but that he must not count on *Russian interference in affairs between himself and Shir-Ali.*

The Amir of Bukhára, through whose territory Abdul-Rahmán had passed, first of all invited him to Hissár, and then, as we have already learnt from the Sirdár's own writings, received him coldly and stopped the subsidy which had been allowed him for his maintenance. By this time there was evinced throughout Afghán-Turkistán a general dissatisfaction with Shir-Ali, and of this Abdul-Rahmán was not slow to take advantage. He wrote to Sámarkand and asked (1), that some point on the Amu-Daria might be assigned where he might live and carry on communication with his adherents; (2), that he might be furnished with money, since those who could supply him with it were now in Shir-Ali's power, and that therefore his resources had dried up. He added that if his request were granted "*then Afghánistán and its wealth would belong to the White Tsár.*"

Meanwhile Shir-Ali had asked the Amir of Bukhára to give him up his rival. Abdul-Rahmán, who now had some misgivings as to his own fate, addressed the Governor-General of Russian-Turkistán by letter, requesting to demand of the Amir of Bukhára that he should be allowed a safe conduct to Sámarkand. Amongst other things he said† in his letter, "It is known to you how my country is under an English protectorate. I place my hope in you because I know very well that *the dominions of the White Tsár are much more vast than are those of the German, French, and English put together.* Having passed through the Waziri country to Mashad, I learnt there that Persia is under the protectorate of the White Tsár. I, therefore, passed through the steppe country of the Tekke-Turkumáns to Khiva, in order that I might make my way to you."

* See Terentieff's work entitled *Russia and England in Central Asia.—Author.*

† Ibid.—*Author.*

General Kaufmann wrote on the 7th (19th) February 1870, in answer to this letter, to say that he agreed to receive Abdul-Rahmán in Russian territory. He further said, "The present ruler of Afghánistán (Shir-Ali-Khán) has been acknowledged as the lawful ruler of this country by England, a power which is on friendly terms with us; so long, therefore, as he does not break the peace and quiet of the Bukháran frontier, I shall have no grounds for regarding him as our enemy."

On the 13th (25th) February 1870, Abdul-Rahmán, attended by a suite of 221 men, came to Sámarkand. He was subsequently permitted to have an interview with the Governor-General of Russian-Turkistán at Táshkand. At this interview, which was of an imposing character, Abdul-Rahmán observed that Shir-Ali did not belong to the number of the friends of Russia, and therefore he ought not to be spared. He made the following requests* to the Governor-General: (1), that he should receive from the Russian Government 3,000 rifles and 7 guns from amongst those captured from the Bukhárans; (2), that he might be allowed to form a detachment from those Afgháns and Persians who had migrated at various times from the Khánate of Bukhára; (3), that he might be permitted to ask leave of the Amir of Bukhára to stay for a short time at Kárki or Shirábád in order to circulate a proclamation to his adherents in Afghánistán; and (4), that whilst he remained in Russian territory he might be allowed to retain his suite.

General Kaufmann agreed to the last request only, and Abdul-Rahmán was consequently assigned the allowance fixed for the maintenance of a Sirdár and his suite, *viz.*, £1,800 *per annum.*† All his other requests were refused, and he was informed that his proposed communication with his adherents in Afghánistán would be displeasing to the Russian Government.

On the 10th (22nd) March 1870, General Kaufmann sent a letter to Shir-Ali, Amir of Afghánistán, informing him of the hospitality which had been extended to Abdul-Rahmán. Amongst other subjects touched upon in this letter it was stated that "the dominions of the White Tsár and the country which is now subject to yourself have no common boundary; there intervenes the Khánate of Bukhára, the ruler of which, Amir, Sayad-Muzaffar, having concluded a peace with Russia, is in friendship with, and under the protection of, the Great Emperor of all the Russians. Consequently, there can be no cause of disagreement between us, and therefore we can and should live in peace and accord. I do not intend to interfere in the internal affairs of Afghánistán, both because you are under the protection of the English Government, which, as you are probably aware, is in friendship and accord with the Government of

* See Terentieff's work entitled *Russia and England in Central Asia.—Author.*

† In 1870 he received £2,526; in 1874 £2,470. In subsequent years, and up to 1880, Abdul-Rahmán received approximately £2,500.—*Author.*

the White Tsár, and because I do not perceive on your part any desire to interfere in the affairs of the Khánate of Bukhára. Afghánistán and Bukhára ought to have nothing in common, and each should, therefore, pursue its own existence, not minding what its neighbour might be doing."

Shir-Ali, having entered *nolens volens* into close relations with the Indian Government, concluded with it the agreement known as "the Umballa Convention." The Afgháns, as the deadly enemies of the English, regarded, as we have already had occasion to remark, these reforms of the Amir in a very unfriendly light. They looked upon them as trenching upon the armed strength of the country, and so in many places they raised the standard of revolt. This was in the year 1870. A combination was thus formed which counted as many as 50,000 armed men. At its head were the Ghilzais, the most powerful tribe in the neighbourhood of Kábul. During the first encounters between this tribe and the Amir's troops the latter lost 1,200 men in killed and 4 guns.

During his stay at Sámarkand, in the spring of 1871, Abdul-Rahmán again raised the question as to his right to the Afghán throne, and he applied to the author of the present work, asking him to acquaint Major-General Abramoff, the Commander of the Zarafshán District, that he intended to go to Bálkh and commence a struggle with Shir-Ali: that his party was strong throughout Afghánistán; that he could easily gain possession of the throne of his famous grandfather; that he would be Russia's true friend, and that he would do all she wished if the small subsidy of £6,000 was allowed him. General Abramoff, who was well acquainted with the general position of affairs, and specially with Central Asian affairs, answered Abdul-Rahmán that he would place the statement of his wishes before the Governor-General of Russian-Turkistán, but that he already had misgivings as to the success of his recommendation, since our Government was not disposed to establish a quarrel with England, who already had doubts as to the sincerity of our peaceful aims in Central Asia, and suspected us of holding the desire to occasion her trouble in India.

Abdul-Rahmán, in spite of his fiery disposition, bravely listened to the advice which the Russian authorities in Turkistán gave him, and resolved to patiently await a favourable opportunity for putting into execution his sacred desires. He was at this time 27 years old, so that the reader can see what a strength of will he developed when he adhered to such a resolution.

Meanwhile, by the end of August 1879, General Kaufmann had received from Shir-Ali an answer to his letter. In this answer the Amir communicated the information that on the receipt of the General's letter of the 10th (22nd) March he had taken counsel with the Viceroy of

India, and had issued orders to all his frontier officials not to interfere in the affairs of his neighbours, not to disquiet them, and not to permit armed parties to cross the Afghán frontier; "all that I have mentioned above," he wrote,* "has not been decided by myself alone, but after seeking the advice of the representative of the English Government, the Viceroy of India, who very well understands the friendly relations which exist between his Government and the Russian Tsár. After a conversation with him I am thoroughly convinced of the friendship that exists between the two Governments, and I am now assured that quiet will be introduced into my own country."

This letter established friendly relations between the Governor-General of Russian-Turkistán and the Afghán Amir, and although the conquest of the Khivan Khánate in 1873 somewhat frightened Shir-Ali, in the end the impression of our victory was productive of some use to us. The Amir was thereby brought to a sense of the serious importance of our power. He was thus induced to weigh the relative position of the Russians and the English in Central Asia. The troublesome interference of the latter in Afghán affairs, and especially in the struggle between the Amir and his rebellious son Yakúb-Khán, offended Shir-Ali, so that he, like his famous father, Dost-Muhammad-Khán, all at once turned his eyes towards the north.

The Amir then began to make overtures to General Kaufmann, who, without seeking the friendship of Afghánistán, could not be wholly indifferent to the peaceful protestations of a neighbour, the more so as the firm establishment of good neighbourly relations might easily lead to the so-much-desired extension of our trade relations with Afghánistán and through it with rich India. The establishment of friendship between General Kaufmann and Shir-Ali was not favourably regarded by Abdul-Rahmán. The English declaration of war against Afghánistán, the death of Shir-Ali, and the banishment of Yakúb-Khán to India, cleared the way for Abdul-Rahmán to the Afghán throne.

11.—Summary of events from the period of Abdul-Rahmán's first appearance in Afghán-Turkistán to the eve of his negotiations with the English concerning his claim to the throne of Afghánistán.

In November 1879 Abdul-Rahmán quitted Táshkand and set out for the province of Farghána, whence he started for the frontier. December passed away, the New Year (1880) set in, January and February came to an end, and the spring began. Meanwhile, the English were considering how they were going to evacuate the country and how they could set up any sort of solid rule in the country and proceed to the choice

* See Terentieff's work entitled *Russia and England in Central Asia.—Author.*

of an Amir. Their complete ignorance as to what Abdul-Rahmán might be doing disturbed the minds of the English commanders, and aroused fresh excitement amongst the population, thereby still further entangling the Anglo-Afghán complication. All at once a telegram was received in London from Teherán, dated the 19th February (2nd March), in which it was stated that Abdul-Rahmán had crossed the Amu-Daria and was proceeding to Herát; that he had addressed a proclamation to the Afghán people in which he *promised to free the country from the foreigners.** All this evidently showed that this Sirdár was at the head of a party that was hostile to the English. The latter were convinced that Muhammad-Ján, the Commander-in-Chief of the Afghán levies, had undoubtedly gone over to the side of the new claimant to the Afghán throne, and that in token of his homage had made over Musa-Khán, Yakúb-Khán's eldest son.

A telegram from Lahore, dated 18th February (1st March), announced that Abdul-Rahmán, who was stated to be at Bálkh, had entered into negotiations with Muhammad-Ján and with Ayúb-Khán, the ruler of Herát.

But the English did not despair, for the organ of the city informed its readers that "Abdul-Rahmán would not be a true Afghán if a feeling of gratitude to Russia should interfere with his going over to the side of the English, in the event of their doing anything to his advantage."

The mother and favourite wife of Abdul-Rahmán, Mariam, who had been imprisoned by Shir-Ali-Khán, were at this time at Kábul. During the month of February 1880, Mariam was very ill,† and the native practitioners who attended her declared that there was no hope of her recovery, but Dr. Johnstone, of the Kábul Field Force, undertook to cure her, and, assisted by Dr. Sulley (?), performed an operation, through which the patient was quite restored to health. Abdul-Rahmán's mother expressed her recognition for the kindness which the English had shown her and her daughter-in-law. "It is very likely," said the correspondent, "that this circumstance may be the means of drawing Abdul-Rahmán nearer to us."

Meanwhile, rumours of the Sirdár's hostile intentions against the English increased yet more and more. A telegram was received in London from Teherán, bearing date the 7th (19th) March, stating that the Governor-General of Persian Khurássán had reported that Abdul-

* The German newspapers did all they could to complicate the Afghán question, and those at Vienna energetically incited the English to occupy Herát as quickly as possible. A Vienna telegram to the *Standard*, dated 28th February (11th March), stated that the town of Bálkh was on Abdul-Rahmán's side, and had sent a deputation inviting him to make Mazár-i-Sharif his temporary residence until Kábul should have been recovered. Abdul-Rahmán is said to have answered, "It is first of all necessary to take Herát."—*Author.*

† Telegram from Kandahar, dated 19th February (2nd March).—*Author.*

Rahmán had sent a force of 5,000 men to Muhammad-Ján to unite with those of Southern Afghánistán for operation against the English.

Some days prior to this, news reached Kábul, declaring that, according to *trustworthy* intelligence, Abdul-Rahmán, accompanied by the ruler of Badákhshán and *two Russian officers*, had arrived at Takhtapul, in the province of Bálkh, in the beginning of March, and that in the first instance Ghulám-Haidar-Khán, the governor of Afghán-Turkistán, was not disposed to allow him to remain there, but he was subsequently obliged to yield to the superior strength of the forces which had accompanied the Sirdár. Such was the information which the English received of the doings of Abdul-Rahmán between November 1879 and March 1880.

Abdul-Rahmán prepared his plans secretly. He did not allow English spies to enter his camp, and he held aloof from all relations with the English,* who were ever sending to him *trustworthy* people. This attitude on his part, according to the measure of his successes in Northern Afghánistán, very likely gave currency to the various rumours regarding his line of action, and was intended, on the one hand, to excite the hopes of the Afgháns, and on the other, to show the English that they were dealing with a cautious man, but with one who, at the same time, would go in a certain direction in the attainment of the object which he had marked out for himself.

We should here observe that, in proportion as the reports of the English spies more and more led them to the conclusion that Abdul-Rahmán was bent upon engaging in an open struggle with them, that was enrolling a strong army, that he was adopting every means to excite in the minds of the people a sympathy with his settled policy, the sympathy of the English increased the more on his behalf. They liked him, of course, for his intelligence, but not for his cordiality, and so *the English Papers* in March 1880 proclaimed him Amir of Kábul, *i.e.*, at a time when the Sirdár became Sovereign of Afghán-Turkistán, and when he gave the Afgháns to understand that he would carry on the struggle with the English.

On the 10th (22nd) March news was received from Persia to the effect that Abdul-Rahmán had addressed a proclamation to the inhabitants of Herát in which he urged them to put an end to their own dissensions, and to join their forces and hasten to march against the English. He at the same time sent a letter to Ayub-Khán, in which he expressed his readiness to make him ruler of Herát after the final overthrow of the English.

Two days before this, news had been received, also through Persia,†

* From the end of March 1880 the telegrams from Kábul and Calcutta conveyed the general idea that the English authorities were up to that time in ignorance with respect to the intentions and action of Abdul-Rahmán, and that, taught by his past experience, he would play a hidden game.—*Author.*

† Report received at Teherán from the Governor-General of Khurássán.—*Author.*

that Abdul-Rahmán had sent his kinsman, Naik-Muhammad, with a detachment of 5,000 men, to the west of Kábul, in order to unite with the levies of the combined Afghán tribes and make a joint attack on the English.

Almost contemporaneously with this news, the *Daily News* received information that the Afgháns were preparing to make a fresh attack on the English position, and that the reports which were reaching Kábul were of a very war-like character.

[Here follows an extract from the *Daily News* commenting on the uncertainty regarding the attitude assumed by Abdul-Rahmán, and adding that it was not known whether Muhammad-Ján was his friend or his enemy.]

[Here, too, is added, as a footnote, the following extract from the *Times*.]

"If Muhammad-Ján acknowledges Abdul-Rahmán as Amir, then the crisis of the war has arrived, for in that case the English must either do the same, and conclude a treaty with him on the basis of that concluded at Gandamak, or else continue a campaign which is likely to prove the most serious of the three. We suppose," the *Times* went on to remark, "that Abdul-Rahmán will consent to enter into negotiations, but he cannot have an English Resident with him, lest he should lose influence in the country."

Subsequently news reached Resht through Constantinople from Teherán, bearing date 17th (29th) March, that Abdul-Rahmán, after occupying Kunduz, was going to march at the head of his troops through Gori and Najshirat on Kábul.

Abdul-Rahmán's appearance in Afghán-Turkistán.

A great impression was thus produced amongst both English and Afgháns by the unexpected appearance of Sirdár Abdul-Rahmán in the upper valley of the Amu-Daria.

His power in Afghán-Turkistán.

Well acquainted with Afghán-Turkistán and having therein many adherents, this Sirdár, aided by those who were faithful to his cause, received the most exact information regarding all that went on in this part of the country. He was thoroughly well acquainted with the complete helplessness of the English with regard to those portions of Afghánistán lying to the north of the Hindu-Kush range.

Ghulám-Haidar-Khán plays for his own hand.

Urged on by the Indian Government, General Roberts essayed to take the administration of the whole of Afghánistán into his own hands, and so he turned his attention to Afghán-Turkistán. But the ruler of this province, Ghulám-Haidar-Khán, was not at all disposed to subject himself to English influence; on the contrary, by taking advantage of the disorder which arose in the country, in consequence of Yakúb-Khán's banishment, he determined on setting up his own authority in the province entrusted to

him, and to lay the beginning of his complete independence. To attain, however, to the latter position was a very difficult task, because the Uzbaks, who constitute the bulk of the population of Afghán-Turkistán, hated him, whilst the Afghán troops and colony were hoping for the restoration of Yakúb-Khán to Kábul. There was then no authority in the country, and of this fact Abdul-Rahmán was ready to take advantage. As we have seen in Northern Afghánistán, he enjoyed a large amount of the love of the local population.

Abdul-Rahmán's popularity in Afghán-Turkistán.

Intent upon the acquisition of Afghán-Turkistán, this Sirdár began to work in two directions. He went in person through Bukháran territory to Badákhshán, and entrusted to his cousins, Ishák-Khán and Sarwar-Khán, who had quitted Sámarkand, the task of looking after his interests westwards.

After crossing the frontier of the province of Farghána, Abdul-Rahmán went straight to Badákhshán. He had with him 260 well-armed and equipped Afghán people, who were his staunch adherents. After making the passage of the Amu-Daria, he speedily and without much trouble possessed himself of the small fort of Yangi-Kala.*

He goes to Badákhshán.

This was in the early part of February 1880. Soon after that he took possession of Rustak, the most important fort of Badákhshán. We have already mentioned that Abdul-Rahmán had married a daughter of a former ruler of Badákhshán, and on this matrimonial alliance was based his success in that country. Bába-Khán, the Beg of Rustak, with whom Abdul-Rahmán entered into negotiations, did not merely receive him unopposed, but met him with honour, treating him as his sovereign, and, in accordance with the existing custom of the country, offering him gifts.

Captures Rustak.

The occupation of Rustak was an event of importance and a good beginning. This fort stands about 46 miles to the west of Faizábád and consequently on the road to the pass of the Hindu-Kush, which leads to Chitrál, Káfiristán, and Kohistán, and beyond to the valley of the Kábul river. Before he proceeded westwards, it was necessary that Abdul-Rahmán should establish communication with the chiefs of those Afghán tribes subject to the direct attack of the English. Amongst the number of these one of the most prominent places belonged to the inhabitants of Kohistán. The brave inhabitants of this mountainous country are also

The importance of this step.

* The details regarding Abdul-Rahmán's conquest of Afghán-Turkistán we have borrowed from an interesting brochure by V. D. Yujakoff, entitled *Abdul-Rahmán, the Afghán*, St. Petersburg, 1881," p. 31.—*Author.*

warlike and freedom-loving; they were, moreover, well acquainted with Abdul-Rahmán from his former actions, and he was, therefore, desirous of renewing the closest and most direct relations with them. His rapid occupation of a portion of Badákhshán was due to Bába-Khán's devotion to him, but he had no grounds for supposing that he would gain as speedy possession of the rest of this country. This consideration suggested to the Sirdár a wisely conceived caution, and so he resolved to remain for a certain time at Rustak. On the other hand, it was extremely important for him to know on what the English authorities had decided, and how they regarded his appearance on the north side of the Hindu-Kush. As a wise and skilful man he was not averse to coming to terms with the English, provided they would agree to secure for him the position of Amir, but he was determined to attach to any agreement on his part certain conditions. He was, however, first of all bent upon establishing his success in Afghán-Turkistán, for he thoroughly understood that the English in all their relations would much prefer to have dealings with a man who had displayed strength of will and who had secured his position in the country.

Abdul-Rahmán's anxiety to enter into the closest relations with the Kohistánis.

His anxiety to know how he was regarded by the English.

Abdul-Rahmán accordingly opened negotiations with the leading men of Badákhshán and of the *Chahár-Wiláyat*, with the ruler of Kunduz, and with those Afgháns dwelling on the route between Mazár-i-Sharif and Bámián, and also with the Kohistánis and the Ghilzais. He meanwhile displayed no desire to have anything to say to the English, for his doing so would have injured his popularity. He indeed promised to free Afghánistán from the foreign invasion.

He nevertheless refrains from making any overtures of peace.

In the Kábul Valley and throughout Afghánistán the talk was about Abdul-Rahmán's appearance in Badákhshán and of his intention of expelling the English from the country.

He is looked upon as the saviour of Afghánistán.

The English authorities paid particular attention to this popular talk and strove to ascertain what course of action Abdul-Rahmán was devising. As we have seen, he too was trying to enter into direct relations with them, but he did not desire that the initiative should come from him. He wished to leave them in ignorance regarding him for a certain time, and he held the opinion that the opening of negotiations with the English would only be of advantage to him after he had become master of the whole country to the north of the Hindu-Kush.

His desire not to be the initiator of negotiations with the English.

With a view to increasing his popularity amongst the inhabitants of Afghán-Turkistán, Abdul-Rahmán actively engaged himself in the

administration of those portions of Badákhshán which he had succeeded in occupying. He laboured without ceasing and even wrote his own official papers. He personally enquired into all the complaints which the people brought him, and decided them on principles of justice. He behaved himself naturally, was accessible to every one, and listened to the opinions offered by the people. Abdul-Rahmán thus speedily gained the love of all, whilst the fame of his justice and firmness was rapidly disseminated throughout Badákhshán. *Sháh-Záda* Hassan, the ruler of Badákhshán, soon lost almost all his power in the country and fled to Shighnán. Meanwhile Bába-Khán, who had been sent by Abdul-Rahmán to Faizábád, the capital of Badákhshán, on the 15th (27th) February made his triumphal entry into that town, the inhabitants of which received him with honour. Very soon the whole of Badákhshán had come into Abdul-Rahmán's possession.

His personal system of government.

He becomes the possessor of the whole of Badákhshán.

Thus, on the left flank of the theatre of his undertakings, the famous Afghán Sirdár had complete success.

His cousins, Ishák-Khán and Sarwar-Khán, began their course of action at the Bukháran fort of Burdálik.* This fort, which stands on the right bank of the Amu-Daria, possesses very great strategical importance. From it roads lead to Bukhára and Kárshi, and thence to Sámarkand. The best road uniting the Khanáte of Bukhára and our province of Zarafshán with the Tekke *oasis* of Marv passes through Burdálik.

Strategical importance of Burdálik.

On his arrival at Burdálik, Ishák-Khán immediately entered into negotiations with the Turkumáns, dwelling on the left bank of the Amu-Daria, since they are on a semi-independent footing with regard to the Amir of Bukhára.

He had a following of 67 armed Afgháns, and with these he crossed the river. Six hundred Turkumáns then joined his party. It follows that Ishák-Khán availed himself of the plundering instincts of the Turkumáns, who saw in this venturesome undertaking an opportunity for a large and successful *alamán*. Without losing any time, Ishák-Khán proceeded up the left bank of the Amu-Daria, and moved against the Afghán fort of Akcha. This fort stands at a distance of 30 miles from Kárki, at a ford across the river, and is distant about 63 miles from Mazár-i-Sharif.

The Afghán fort of Akcha.

Having arrived at the village of Sayadábád, which is 16 miles from Akcha, Ishák-Khán halted his party and began to negotiate with the Afgháns. Deserters informed him that when they heard of his approach the whole garrison of Akcha decided upon going over to his

* This is the place named as a station on the Central-Asian Railway now in course of construction from Kizil-Arvat *vid* Askhabad Sarakh, Marv, and across the Oxis.—W. E. G.

side. On the one hand, Sirdár Ishák-Khán did not believe in the sincerity of these assurances, and, on the other, he could not make up his mind to use open force, since his party was a mere rabble, being both badly armed and altogether without discipline. He halted at Sayadábád for four days, when, having heard that Muhammad Khán, the brother of the ruler of the *Chahár-Wiláyat*, was advancing against him from Bálkh with a force of 1,000 horsemen and four guns, he made a hasty retreat. He withdrew to the Bukháran fort of Kárki, his following at this time being 67 Afgháns and a few score Turkumáns. The rest had fled. Fearing lest the Afgháns should wreak vengeance on them, the inhabitants of Kárki demanded that Ishák-Khán would leave their fort. The Sirdár thereupon fled due south into Afghán territory to the country of the Andkhui-Turkumáns. The town of Andkhui lies about 77 miles from Kárki and is nearly 133 miles to the west of Mazár-i-Sharif.

Thus, Ishák-Khán's wishes to achieve swift successes near the capital of Afghán-Turkistán were not crowned with success.

Near Andkhui there was encamped a small Afghán force numbering 300 men, and so Ishák-Khán resolved to disgrace himself as a soldier and to go, after the manner of Afgháns, with the *Kurán* on his head and with peaceful protestations into the Afghán camp.

He thus gave himself up without a struggle into the hands of his enemies. The Afgháns received him and then sent him away from their camp, advising him to give up the business which Abdul-Rahmán had in view.

Meanwhile, Sirdár Sarwar-Khán, who had separated himself from his brother, had started with six Afgháns in the direction of Shibirkhán, which lies between Andkhui and Mazár-i-Sharif, and about 66 miles from the latter place. In spite of his declaration, made at the gates of Shibirkhán, that he was only a messenger who had brought despatches, he was taken and brought before Abdul-Kádir-Khán, the commandant of the place. He at once recognised the new arrival, and directed him to be sent under a guard to Mazár-i-Sharif. Ghulám-Haidar ordered him to be shot. Ishák-Khán now completely lost his head. The Bukharán Government counselled him to give up the task entrusted to him, and either to return to Sámarkand or to make his way to Badákhshán to Abdul-Rahmán. The Sirdár answered that his conscience would not allow him to do either the one or the other, and so he went to Herát and thence to Teherán.

By this time Abdul-Rahmán had become ruler of the whole of Badákhshán, and he had already entered into close relations with all the leading men of the *Chahár-Wiláyat*. Ghulam-Haidar's authority was quite on the wane. He was not in a position to pay his troops, and consquently they were in a state of revolt. Andkhui, Shibirkhán, Akcha, Sar-i-pul, and

Ghulám-Haidar's authority in the *Chahár-Wiláyat* is on the wane.

Maimana had already declared for Abdul-Rahmán. Ishák-Khán now determined to take advantage of the favourable turn of circumstances, and so, after entering into communication with the commanders of the several forts, troops and influential personages, he circulated amongst the people a proclamation in his brother's name. What, therefore, he had done at Andkhui he repeated at Maimana. With the *Kurán* on his head, and with a confession of military shame, he went into the town. He was sympathetically received and was given 150 well-armed horsemen. This force soon grew to 400, and he then took possession of Andkhui, the inhabitants of which met him with gifts and tribute for Abdul-Rahmán. He was now joined by the garrison of the fort, and with this increase to his following he was enabled to occupy unopposed both Shibirkhán and Akcha. The garrisons of these forts arrested their commanders and brought them and the inhabitants before Ishák-Khán, declaring at the same time their devotion to Abdul-Rahmán's cause. Regular Afghán battalions now went over *en masse* to Ishák-Khán's side. His success was now complete, and Ghulám-Haidar was placed in the most critical situation. Being desirous of arresting the rapid successes of Ishák-Khán, the ruler of Afghán-Turkistán marched a force to the fort of Takhtapul, which lies some miles to the west of Mazár-i-Sharif. The garrison of the fort closed the city gates, and gave Ishák-Khán to understand that they would remain faithful to Abdul-Rahmán. The Naib laid siege to the fort. Half of his force proved traitors, and he was then obliged to return to Mazár-i-Sharif. On arrival there the portion of his force which had hitherto been faithful openly rebelled, and Ghulám-Haidar at length understood that he had lost all authority in the country. Taking his family and a portion of his property, the ruler of Afghán-Turkistán, who had dreamt of making himself an independent sovereign, fled with twenty still-faithful followers to Buhhára.* There being now at Mazár-i-Sharif no head, the troops plundered the city.

The *Chahár-Wiláyat* took some time to quiet down. The old officials had been deprived of their importance; the new ones had not yet succeeded in gaining complete authority. Ishák-Khán was placed at the head of the administration, and was made Abdul-Rahmán's Naib, or Deputy, but he knew nothing about the work, as we shall see further on. One of his first acts was to take a bloody revenge for the execution of his brother, Sarwar-Khán. The garrison of Shibirkhán having made over to him Abdul-Kádir, their former commandant, who had always fulfilled his charge with honour, Ishák-Khán ordered that his beard should be shaved off at Mazár-i-Sharif; in other words, that the greatest indignity in the eyes of Mussulmáns should be put upon him

* In the *Daily News* there appeared the following telegram, dated Kábul, 12th (24th) March, "The Afghán troops in Turkistán have declared for Abdul-Rahmán, who is at Kandahar near Kunduz. The Governor of Turkistán has fled."—*Author.*

and that he should then be conducted through the city mounted on an ass. After subjecting his victim to prolonged tortures, Ishák-Khán ordered him to be thrown into a cauldron containing boiling fat. The new ruler of the *Chahár-Wiláyat* showed himself to be extremely avaricious, a fact which was far from being conducive to the pacification of the population, which was already in a great state of commotion.

Abdul-Rahmán takes possession of Kunduz.

During this time Abdul-Rahmán had possessed himself of Kunduz. At the close of February, after increasing his force by some marksmen enrolled from amongst the mountaineers of Badákhshán, the Sirdár advanced against Kunduz, and on the 28th February (12th March) captured the fort of Talikán.

Sultán-Murád, the ruler of Kunduz, who had already been in communication with the English, assumed a hostile attitude towards the Naib of the *Chahár-Wiláyat*, and at one time thought of declaring himself independent of the Amir of Afghánistán.

In order to establish his authority over the Afgháns of Kunduz, Ghulám-Haidar despatched a strong force from Tásh-Kurgán against Sultán-Murád, consisting of 3,000 infantry, 1,000 cavalry, and 8 guns. This Ghulám-Haidar did five days before his flight from Mazár-i-Sharif to Bukhára. On receipt of the news of the Naib's flight, the Tásh-Kurgán detachment did not return, but continued its march towards Kunduz. *En route* it engaged and defeated Sultán-Murád's troops, and having possessed itself of his capital began to plunder it. This pillaging went on for three whole days. After this the entire force, with the exception of Gul-Ahmad's battalion of *Kizil-Báshis*,* returned to Tásh-Kurgán.† Sultán-Murád, who up to this time had been unfriendly, and even hostile to Abdul-Rahmán, all at once changed his course of action and went out to meet the Sirdár with offerings and marks of honour as his conqueror.

Abdul-Rahmán selected as his temporary residence Khánábád, which

Abdul-Rahmán makes Khánábád his head-quarters.

lies about 13 miles to the east of Kunduz. Here he resolved to consider and to shape his further course of action.

The whole of Afghán-Turkistán was already in his hands, and his

His authority is established through Afghán-Turkistán.

authority had everywhere been set up. The troops recognised him as their sovereign and commander-in-chief. The people looked to the future with confidence. And yet Abdul-Rahmán did not feel that his rule was

* This battalion at first hesitated about going over to Abdul-Rahmán, intending to march on Kábul. Subsequently it changed its intention.—*Author.*

† A telegram to the *Daily News*, dated Kábul, 12th (24th) March, stated that the regiments sent (according to English information two) against the Khán of Kunduz mutinied, and murdered the brother of Ghulám-Haidar, who had killed Muhammad, son of the late Azam-Khán, and that the Turkistán troops had declared themselves adherents of Abdul-Rahmán, whose intentions with regard to the English were unknown.—*Author.*

really stable, for the amount of money at his disposal was very limited! In order to secure the love and confidence of his troops he must, of course, pay them. This was Abdul-Rahmán's chief difficulty, because he desired to have at any cost a powerful and well-organized body of troops* at hand.

The ruler of Kunduz, wishing to preserve to himself his hereditary possessions, brought to Abdul-Rahmán as tribute £2,000 and 3,000 tons of grain.† This contribution considerably added to the Sirdár's resources. Fortunately for him, too, at this time there was passing through Afghán-Turkistán a caravan of 500 camels laden with Indian goods *en route* to Bukhára. Abdul-Rahmán levied a toll thereon, and exacted a sum of £12,000.

Both in the *Chahár-Wiláyat* and in Badákhshán, Abdul-Rahmán zealously laboured at the administration of the country, and in a very short time effaced the bad impression which had been created by Ishák-Khán. Order was now established throughout the country, and the discipline of the troops was gradually improved.

Abdul-Rahmán's position is secured to the north of the Hindu-Kush.

Abdul-Rahmán was at length able to feel that his affairs on the north side of the Hindu-Kush were in train, and he was therefore more at liberty to turn his attention to what was passing on the south side of the same range.

The English authorities, too, perceived that they had to deal with a strong man.

The appearance of Abdul-Rahmán in Afghán-Turkistán coincided in respect of time with the decision of the English Government to once for all decide the fate of Afghánistán in a sense more favourable to the interests of British India. The English Government had come to the conclusion that a *united* Afghánistán would not be conducive to English interests, and it therefore endeavoured, both by force of arms and by diplomacy, to divide the country into several provinces quite independent of each other, and to place these provinces under the direct control of the Indian Empire. By far the most important point of the Afghán question was the settlement of the fate of Herát.

English news from Kábul gave assurances that the leading men

* An Allahabad telegram to the London *Daily Chronicle*, dated 23rd March (4th April) communicated the following: "Abdul-Rahmán has assumed the title of Amir of Afghán-Turkistán and has established his capital at Bálkh. He has imposed a war contribution on the inhabitants, and has appointed governors of provinces in order to see that his orders are carried out."—*Author.*

† The Tiflis correspondent of the *Neue Frie Presse* stated that Abdul-Rahmán, through his agents at Táshkand and Bukhára, obtained large sums of money; that the Amir of Bukhára being very friendly to the Sirdár's enterprise had authorised several bankers to give him loans, and that in this way Abdul-Rahmán had received the sum of £75,000 at a moderate rate of interest. This information is but little deserving of credit, although it is very possible, since the bankers of Bukhára have very close trading interests with Afghánistán, and might therefore have placed at Abdul-Rahmán's disposal a certain amount of money.—*Author.*

there quite approved of the decision of the British Government with regard to Kandahar, and wished for a similar application in the case of the Kábul province. But we know what sort of importance may be attached to the opinion of those Afghán Sirdárs who thought it safer and more to their own advantage to be attached to the suite of General Roberts. There remained, however, the very important question as to how the future Amir would regard the matter. We know that at this time the British Government really did not know who would be Amir, although it had begun to be apparent that the most serious candidate was Sirdár Abdul-Rahmán. His Russian sympathies, however, so frightened the English that they could not make up their minds at all about making over to him Afghánistán intact.

Thus, apparently, the fate of Afghánistán had been irrevocably decided. The English Queen herself had thought it expedient to interfere in the affairs of the country, but she had abrogated her sovereign rights over the population of Southern Afghánistán to Sirdár Shir-Ali Khán. The Sirdár had been triumphantly proclaimed the sovereign of Kandahar. His army had been organised and equipped. All were convinced that the programme of the Conservative Ministry, so hastily announced by Lord Lytton, had entered upon a real existence.

But this calculation proved to be mistaken.

From one quarter news reached the British authorities that Abdul-Rahmán-Khán, the candidate for the throne of the Amir, who had succeeded in obtaining for himself a vast amount of sympathy amongst those classes of the Afghán people who were the most hostile to the English, had expressed the firm resolve not to give up to them the authority over the province of Kandahar. Abdul-Rahmán had, moreover, formed an army, and was gradually moving in southwards. The Anglo-Indian Government could no longer ignore the decision of the famous Sirdár. The force of circumstances compelled it to reckon with Abdul-Rahmán, who was not the kind of man not to understand how entangled the English had become with the Afghán question.

On the other hand, the new Liberal Ministry of Great Britain was not at all disposed to continue those political mistakes and fantastic contrivances of Lord Beaconsfield, which had brought no kind of advantage to the direct interests of the English nation, but which had entailed a colossal expenditure and had injured the credit of the country. The new Ministry, in the pursuit of the instincts of true patriotism, had decided to finish once for all with the Afghán question and to allow Afghánistán to lead her own life.

[Here follows the text of a statement made in the House of Commons by Lord Hartington, Secretary of State for India, on the 26th May (7th June), regarding the instructions given to the Marquis of Ripon, the new Viceroy of India, as to the policy of the Government towards Afghánistán.]

The question of the strengthening of the independence of the Kandahar province, stated by the Conservative Ministry, was declared by the new Government to be a question of honour, but it entered upon an altogether unexpected phase, for we shall see that it was decided by Ayúb-Khán, the brother of the banished Amir and the ruler of Herát. This *foolish* Afghán aristocrat shewed the English that twice two made four, and that to hold Kandahar with even a relatively strong Anglo-Indian force was far from being an easy task.

12.—Abdul-Rahmán's policy after he had established his authority in Afghán-Turkistán and during the negotiations which led to his being proclaimed Amir of Afghánistán.

General Roberts sent messenger after messenger and used every endeavour to enter into an agreement with Abdul-Rahmán, and although this Sirdár systematically refused all negotiations, the English were not mortified, but continued to adhere to the conviction that it was with their aid alone that a durable Government could be established in Afghánistán.*

Up to April 1880, *i.e.*, until Abdul-Rahmán had established his authority throughout Afghán-Turkistán, he did not trouble the English, and he did not desire to have any dealings with them. When, however, he had become fully assured of his complete success on the north side of the Hindu-Kush, Abdul-Rahmán decided to show to the enemies of his native land his own strength, and by adhering to a secret game to bring matters to a crisis.

Abdul-Rahmán insists upon the integrity of Afghánistán.

The crisis of the Afghán complication had set in. Afghán-Turkistán had been conquered by Sirdár Abdul-Rahmán. Ayúb-Khán, the ruler of Herát, had decided upon quitting his capital and marching on Kandahar. The English authorities had entered into negotiations with the talented grand-son of Dost-Muhammad-Khán, and had offered him the throne of Kábul. Abdul-Rahmán had not accepted the offer, for he considered the conditions attaching to it derogatory to himself and to his nation. The English had then to make several material concessions to the proud Sirdár, who would not even listen to the making of Kandahar a separate sovereignty. He further demanded the whole of Afghánistán, as it was in the days of his grand-sire.

* It is remarkable that, when the English came to the belief that Abdul-Rahmán alone could save them, they began to say that he had left Russian territory of his own accord, and that the Russian Government had not connived at his escape. Thus, a Calcutta telegram of the 16th (28th) March, said:—"The question which has arisen since the flight of Abdul-Rahmán is, did he succeed in evading the Russian frontier guards, or did he with their knowledge cross over into Turkistán? This question has not yet been answered. It seems more probable, however, that he fled without the Russians knowing that he was going.—*Author.*

His most devoted friends on the south side of the Hindu-Kush, within the region of the English operations, were the Kohistánis. He wrote them a letter* inviting them to send an armed party to his camp; 3,000 men answered his summons, and great agitation prevailed throughout Kohistán. The chiefs of these warlike mountaineers had sent Abdul-Rahmán a letter, in which they welcomed him as their sovereign, and he accordingly informed them that he would soon make his appearance on the south side of the Hindu-Kush. In one of the letters which he addressed to all the Afghán chiefs he declared *that he would oppose the making of Kandahar province an independent State.*

It must be remarked that the general character of Abdul-Rahmán's letters which he sent to the Afgháns revealed great skill and a certain, though very comprehensible, cunning. Without expressing direct hostility to the English, the Sirdár at the same time excited the Afghán chiefs and leading men, who took advantage of his influence *to collect, prepare, and await his directing hand.* In his letters to the priesthood, Abdul-Rahmán spoke of the faith, and of his readiness to stand at the head of a great religious movement. In his letters to the war party he touched upon the past glory of Afghánistán, and he spoke of his hope of restoring its former brilliancy. In his letters to the principal traders of Kábul he said that the trading classes need have no fear concerning his future course of action, and he explained that extreme necessity alone compelled him to direct the collection in Turkistán of compulsory loans. He went on to promise that he would give complete freedom to trade of every kind, and that he would take all measures for giving life to trade with Bukhára and with the Khánates. In his letters to the adherents of the former Amir Yakúb-Khán, he carefully kept in view that he was not either a competitor or a pretender to the Amirship, but that in the character of a simple Afghán Sirdár he was expressing the wish to restore the Amir, whom the English had arrested and banished from his country.† When the English requested the pretender to explain his meaning in these letters, he simply answered that with Afgháns it was necessary to act as an Afghán.

The English authorities took no offence at this reply, but hastened to carry out all that the Sirdár demanded of them.

By the middle of April 1880 the position of the English and of Abdul-Rahmán was very different, and all the advantages were on the side of the latter. After the English had occupied Kandahar and Kábul, they considered themselves masters of the Southern and Central Afghánistán, although in reality their authority did not extend beyond those

* At a Darbár held at Kábul on the 9th (21st) April 1830, at which ninety Kohistáni Chiefs attended, the English authorities learnt that Abdul-Rahmán had addressed circular letters to the Chiefs of this tribe.—*Author.*

† This information we insert in full reliance on the English correspondence.—*Author.*

points which were firmly held by their troops. The people around were openly and always hostile to them. In the immediate neighbourhood of Kábul was a strong body composed of various Afghán tribes, whilst Ayúb-Khán's army threatened them on the side of Herát. After Abdul-Rahmán had become master of the whole of Northern Afghánistán, he had at his disposal a considerable army, and the sympathy of the population was also on his side.

The English authorities clearly perceived that affairs were about to assume a very serious turn, and that they must perforce take into consideration those conditions which Abdul-Rahmán demanded before he would consent to negotiate with them. Feeling their own helplessness with regard to the restoration of order in Afghán affairs, the English became convinced of the necessity of making concessions, even though those might be lowering to their self-esteem.

The Indian Government at length clearly recognised that the military operations which had lasted so long in Afghánistán had not led to those results which it had in view at the beginning of the campaign, and that the people of the invaded country not only did not recognise the power of Great Britain, but were resolved to organise, without their aid and in spite of their control, their own national form of Government, and thus rid themselves of an unbidden and wearisome guardianship.

Under these circumstances the Indian Government found it conducive to its policy to enter into a line of concessions of different kinds, and so it instructed Lieutenant-General Roberts to at once open negotiations with the leaders of the Afghán people.

[The rest of this chapter is taken up with a narration of the course of these negotiations, first of all, as conducted by General Roberts, and subsequently by Mr. Lepel Griffin as the Special Commissioner of the Indian Government.]

Abdul-Rahmán now very clearly saw that if he was not stronger than the English, he was not in any case weaker than they were, and therefore he adhered to the firm determination not to allow the severance of Kandahar from Afghánistán. This resolve had the effect which he anticipated.

As soon, therefore, as Abdul-Rahmán loudly proclaimed his close connection with Kohistán, and held out about Kandahar, the English Papers, echoing the views of the English authorities, lowered their tone. Thus, the *Standard* immediately received a telegram from the theatre of military operations, to say that the attention of all was turned to Abdul-Rahmán, whose course of action was the more important because of the position of affairs in Southern Afghánistán, and that, therefore, the Queen's proclamation, regarding the formation of a separate administration at Kandahar under Shir-Ali, was considered *premature*, since Abdul-Rahmán, according to the general opinion of the people, was

not the kind of man to be satisfied with a part only, when he could get the whole.

Aware of the real necessity of negotiating something with Abdul-Rahmán, the English endeavoured to soften the severity of the *Sirdár's* letter. It was necessary to adopt this line of action, so as to prepare the public mind for the thought of handing over the administration of the whole of Afghánistán to this magnate. To this end the correspondent of the *Times* telegraphed from Kábul to London on the 13th (25th) April to say that many of Abdul-Rahmán's letters had been intercepted at Kábul, and that for the most part their contents were appeals to the religious and patriotic feelings of the population, and announcements *that he would return* after a long* banishment *to restore the dignity of Afghánistán.* The correspondent added that not one of these letters breathed hostility to the British Government, but, on the contrary, many of them displayed a friendly tone. Other signs, too, made to the English authorities revealed in the author the liveliest desire to be on the best terms with the English.

[Here General Soboleff gives another extract from the same correspondent's communication, from which he draws the following conclusions.]

From this it may be seen that Abdul-Rahmán did not advance towards the English at all, but that the advances made came from them; that the English sent numerous agents to this Sirdár, and that up to the end of April 1880 he did not receive one of them; that when he decided to correspond with the English he took this step in the full knowledge of his own strength.

We have already learnt that at a Darbár held at Kábul the Kohistáni chiefs expressed to General Roberts their readiness to receive, as Amir of Afghánistán, that person who should be raised to the dignity by the British Government, but that on this occasion a voice was raised on behalf of Abdul-Rahmán, and intimation was privately given that he was their chosen candidate.

A Lahore telegram of the 17th (29th) April 1880 mentioned that the English authorities at Sherpur had received on the 7th (19th) idem a letter from Abdul-Rahmán making certain statements under four heads.

[General Soboleff, in giving the text of this letter, adds in a foot note—]

"Unfortunately we have no exact translation of this letter. We are not sure, therefore, whether its contents have been accurately conveyed to us or not."

We should bear in mind that at this time Lieutenant-General Stewart had developed his operations, and that on the 7th (19th) April at Ahmad-Khel he had gained a victory over the Afgháns, that on the

* A Kandahar telegram, dated 26th April (8th May), spoke of a letter which Abdul-Rahmán had sent to his mother, in which he told her of his arrival in Afghán-Turkistán, and of the submission shown to him there.—*Author.*

following day he had occupied Ghazni, and that on the 11th (23rd) of the same month he had again defeated the Afgháns near Ghazni, and, after establishing a native administration in the province, had moved with his column towards Kábul.

The English authorities wished in some way or other to put an end to the Afghán question,* for, as we have repeatedly stated, the Afghán campaign weakened to a considerable degree the military position of the English in India. A further weakening of this position would, as the English themselves knew very well, lead to the most fatal consequences to them. We know that by the withdrawal of General Stewart's Bengal Division from Kandahar, the English denuded Southern Afghánistán, and that in order to hold it at all they were obliged to send there a special division formed of the indifferent troops of the Bombay Presidency. But by doing this they left themselves no reserves. Moreover, when the hot season came round again, they could only expect an increase of sickness in the ranks of the English soldiers.

On the arrival of the Kandahar Division in the Logar Valley, General Stewart marched straight for Kábul, where he took out of General Roberts's hands the administration of Central Afghánistán. Immediately afterwards active negotiations were started with Abdul-Rahmán, and from a telegram dated Kábul, 20th April (2nd May), we know that two natives of Mr. Lepel Griffin's suite were despatched from Sherpur, on a mission to Abdul-Rahmán. Up till now we are not aware of the details of the negotiations carried on between the English and this Sirdár, so that for the elucidation of this question we are obliged to make use of the fragmentary information, often contradictory, communicated by English correspondents. These negotiations began by the English sending their agents to Abdul-Rahmán. These agents arranged the chief preliminary conditions and caused a return embassy from Abdul-Rahmán, which, according to a telegram sent to the *Daily News* from Kábul on the 26th April (8th May), crossed the Parwán Pass of the Hindu-Kush range, towards the close of April.

The preliminary conditions put forward by the British authorities were in all probability favourable to Abdul-Rahmán, since, according to English information current at Kábul, several letters were received there, in the very beginning of May from the Sirdár in which he dwelt on the fact that further opposition to the English could only harm him and be detrimental to the interests of the inhabitants of Afghánistán. Correspondents added to this information that the disturbances which had arisen in Badákhshán were suppressed by the imprisonment of the

* The Kábul correspondent of the *Times*, in reviewing the general position of affairs on the 27th April (9th May), remarked that Abdul-Rahmán's first successes had somewhat moderated, both because of his want of money and the dissatisfaction with him which had arisen in Badákhshán. These circumstances could not but induce the pretender to seek more than he had yet done the support of the British authorities and their troops.—*Author*.

promoters; that Abdul-Rahmán had paid the troops the amount due to them, and had even made them advances, so that he was now the undisputed ruler of the whole of the country to the north of the Hindu-Kush. We have reasons for the belief that in the middle of April the British authorities proposed to Abdul-Rahmán, though secretly, that he should accept the position of Amir,* and that they at the same time furnished him with money. In a word, they wished to *buy him over*, so that the Lahore telegram of the 1st (13th) May to the *Daily News* denying the rumour current at the time that the English had offered Abdul-Rahmán money if he would come to Kábul, can only serve to indirectly confirm our assertion.†

When the basis‡ of a treaty had been worked out, the British authorities despatched a fresh embassy to Khánábád,§ and this one included several Afghán Sirdárs. The new embassy made its way in triumph to the head-quarters of the future Amir. More than 1,000 men, principally Kohistánis, accompanied it to Afghán-Turkistán. Its onward progress was attended by special marks of respect on the part of the Sirdárs of the provinces on the line of route, for Abdul-Rahmán had directed all the Governors and officials to show this embassy all possible respect and attention. When it arrived within two marches of Khánábád it was met by a detachment of cavalry, under Ismail-Khán, and this body escorted it to the Amir elect.

Thus, the British authorities were impelled by the force of circumstances to make public overtures to the Afghán Sirdár, who had come from Russian territory.

On the 12th (24th) May letter reached Kábul from a member of the English Mission. In this it was stated that Abdul-Rahmán had received the embassy with all possible respect. At a triumphal Darbár the letter from the English Government was read out, and with it Abdul-Rahmán expressed himself quite satisfied. Between the pretender and the members of the English embassy there were three meetings, an account of which was sent to Mr. Lepel Griffin. The demeanour of the Sirdár toward the members of the Embassy was frank and friendly, and

* General Soboleff here quotes a communication from the Kábul correspondent of the *Times*, dated 4th (16th) May.—*Translator.*

† He also quotes Kábul telegram to the *Daily News*, dated 14th (26th) May, stating that the person who had arrived at Kábul with a letter from Abdul-Rahmán spoke of the good impression which had been produced throughout Afghán-Turkishtán by the payment of the troops in Abdul-Rahmán's employ.—*Translator.*

‡ One of the conditions named by Abdul-Rahmán was that the English would undertake to weaken Yakúb-Khán's party, and we see, therefore, that almost at the time of the triumphal entry of the English Mission into Khánábád the famous Mustafa Habibulla was arrested at Kábul. Outwardly he had been considered to be the friend of the English; in secret he was Yakúb-Khán's principal advocate.—*Author.*

§ According to a Calcutta telegram of the 11th (23rd) May, the English embassy must have been at Khánábád at this time, for on this date news of its arrival there was awaited at Kábul.—*Author.*

with them he conversed about his affairs in a sensible and practical manner.

In a Kábul telegram of the 14th (26th) May* it was stated *that the British embassy had proposed to Abdul-Rahmán that he should assume the title of Amir, but that the Sirdár had not yet returned an answer to the invitation.*

Abdul-Rahmán, it seems, purposed to confer with the influential men under him before giving a final answer to the proposal which had been made to him. It is manifest to all how such a determination on the Sirdár's part was very humiliating to the dignity of the British authorities, for it clearly showed them how low was the position which they occupied with respect to Abdul-Rahmán. He had triumphed, and without being allured by the flattering proposal made to him was pondering over what he ought to do.

In order to illustrate the Sirdár's position in so delicate a question as an unconditional and hasty assent to the English proposals, we will here insert a very interesting conversation held at Kábul between an Englishman and an Afghán Sirdár.

[Here General Soboleff inserts a telegram to the *Times* dated 18th (30th) May.]

The return Mission from Abdul-Rahmán reached Kábul on the 13th (25th) May. In all probability the reply received was not satisfactory, for the English newspapers all at once began to talk once more about the very bad state of affairs in Afghán-Turkistán. According to this information the country around Bálkh was in a state of great disorder; Abdul-Rahmán had sent his family to Sámarkand: there was a strict watch kept over travellers, who were questioned and their property examined; a considerable compulsory loan had been notified in Turkistán, and until this had been paid up in full, trade had been prohibited, by which, of course, the population had been exasperated; the goods of merchants had been confiscated.†

Meanwhile Abdul-Rahmán wrote a letter to the leading men of Kábul, in which he thanked God "that *at length the gates of friendship between himself and the English have been opened.*" In this letter he expresses the hope that a satisfactory settlement will be arrived at, and the assurance that all those who were loyal to former Amirs will be loyal also to him. In conclusion, he promised to welcome them all at Kábul.

The delay in the negotiations and the indecision on the part of Abdul-Rahmán, discerned by the English, were explained at Kábul and in India by the statement that the Sirdár was awaiting his orders from the Russian Government. The *Times* correspondent, in a telegram dated

* *Daily News.—Author.*

† Telegram from the Kábul correspondent of the *Times*, dated 18th (30th) May.—*Author.*

Kábul, 21st May (2nd June), directly asserted that Abdul-Rahmán was, in the opinion of the members of the English Mission, under powerful Russian influence, and that he would delay matters until the receipt of his instructions from Táshkand.

On the 21st May (2nd June) the two Sirdárs who had been sent as envoys to Khánábád returned to Kábul. An account of the reports brought back by these Sirdárs is contained in a Kábul telegram to the *Times*, and we consider it useful to quote the words of this telegram.*

The English authorities were decidedly displeased with the turn which the negotiations with the pretender had taken, and so they threatened him with the restoration to Kábul of his talented rival, Yakúb-Khán. In a Kabul telegram dated 1st (13th) June, the following statement was made: "The negotiations with Abdul-Rahmán, respecting his assumption of the dignity of Amir, are meeting with some difficulty; *Yakúb-Khán's restoration is considered possible.*"

We invite our readers' attention to this circumstance, since the idea that it was expedient to restore Yakúb-Khán to the position of Amir very definitely indicated that the English recognised how completely they had become entangled in Afghán complications. Yakúb-Khán was their sworn enemy; his party, at the head of which were the two remarkable Afgháns Muhammad-Ján and Mushk-i-Alam, had displayed a fierce opposition to the English troops, and was not at all disposed to enter into any agreement that would be unfavourable to the country. Yakúb-Khán's restoration under such circumstances would naturally be taken by the Afgháns as a victory over the English.

At Kábul the people were almost convinced that Abdul-Rahmán was not at all disposed to unconditionally accept everything that the English proposed to him. By the beginning of June it had become known that the Sirdár had offered Muhammad-Ján the post of Commander-in-Chief of the Afghán army, and that he had sent a letter to Alam-Khán, the Governor of Ghazni, asking him to co-operate.

On the 2nd (14th) June an envoy left Kábul with the English *ultimatum*, calling upon Abdul-Rahman to *definitely* make up his mind as to whether he would reject or accept the English conditions. At this very time Mr. Lepel Griffin received from the Sirdár a very "cordial" letter, and yet the Afghán leading men had been cautioned by special messengers not to place too great reliance on his coming. These messages excited great agitation amongst the people, for they interpreted them to mean that Abdul-Rahmán was about to invite them to take part in a *jehád*, or "holy war."

On the 4th (16th) June a telegram reached London from Kábul to say that Abdul-Rahmán, with a force of 2,000 men and 12 guns, was starting

* Telegram dated Kábul, 25th May (6th June), which is quoted by General Soboleff at great length.—*W. E. G.*

for Kábul. According to another telegram, the Sirdár at the same time sent a letter to the British authorities, in which he informed them of his wish to avail himself of the invitation which they had given to him to go to Charikar.

It is noticeable that, according to the statements of some Khokandians who had arrived at Kábul, the English about this time began to disseminate throughout Afghánístán rumours that the Chinese, after declaring war against Russia, had gained a victory and had captured the fort of Nárin. They hoped that this news would strongly influence Abdul-Rahmán's decision, and they supposed that "the intelligence regarding a Chinese invasion of Russian territory would compel him to reflect.* Abdul-Rahmán, on his part, made a concession which was very important in the eyes of the Indian Government; he promised to have no relations with Russia, without first seeking the advice of the English. This demand was in reality a *futile* one; nevertheless, the British Government considered it of real importance. It may even be supposed that this valuation acts disadvantageously for the English, since it shows the Afgháns that they dread the influence of Russia. We have grounds for the belief that the sympathy of this Asiatic people towards Russia, which was so clearly displayed during the war, was the fault of the English themselves, for they both excited and supported it, now by displaying dread of a Russian invasion, now by forbidding the Amir to have relations with the Russians.

However this may be, Abdul-Rahmán readily assented to this *primary* demand of the English. Throughout the rest of the stipulations the triumph was on his side.

When he arrived within a short distance of Charikar, Abdul-Rahmán was met by a deputation from Kábul, which was sent *unofficially* by the English. This deputation consisted of Sirdárs and other popular representatives. The deputation conveyed to the Sirdár the final expression of the wishes of the British Government to give its complete accord to all the conditions which had been specified by him, and that, therefore, he would be received by its representatives with friendship and with respect. The future Amir enchanted the members of the deputation, and this is not in the least surprising, as he was in an excellent frame of mind, for he had triumphed. One of the members of the deputation, who, on setting out from Kábul, had been prejudiced against the Amir elect, himself declared, on his return to the city, that he was charmed by the amiability and sound sense displayed by Abdul-Rahmán. He related to Afgháns and to Englishmen how he had never seen a Barakzai Sirdár of this description.

On the arrival of the pretender at Charikar, Sirdár Afzul-Khán, who had gone as one of the English envoys to Khánábád, was presented to

* Kábul telegram to the "*Times*," dated 8th (20th) June.—*Author.*

him. This Sirdár was quite enthusiastic about him, and he brought from Khánábad various details about this remarkable candidate for the throne of Afghánistán.* He affirmed that Abdul-Rahmán is very industrious and often works for three hours of the night; that he rises early in order to perform his morning prayer, and then retires to rest until 9 or 10 A.M. When he again gets up, he immediately resumes his work; he eats only once in the day, *viz.*, about 4 P M., but he drinks quantities of tea. He never engages in idle conversation, and is evidently a man with a wide knowledge of the world and with a strong character; he is possessed of the perfection of skill calculated to make him a good ruler of those men with whom he may come in contact; he is frank, but not in the least unmannerly, converses very freely with his visitors, composes his own papers, has no advisers, and only two or three confidants.

On the 14th (26th) June Abdul-Rahmán's answer to the *ultimatum* of the British Government was received at Kábul. The contents of this answer raised doubts as to the Sirdár's sincerity, for both in it and in his proclamation to the Afghán people, *Abdul-Rahmán posed as one who did not know what was to become of Kandahar*, whereas the English Government had informed him in clear language that it was *to constitute a separate province under the administration of its own sovereign or Wali*, and that this decision, as also the delimitation of the frontier, according to the terms of the Treaty of Gandamak, could not be subjected to revision. In his answer the pretender repeated the conditions mentioned to him by the English Mission, but he was silent regarding the above important facts, *maintaining*, both in his letter to the English authorities and in his proclamation to the Afghán people, *that he must be placed in possession of the same territory that his grandfather, Dost-Muhammad, had held.*† In other respects the letter thoroughly satisfied the English authorities. Abdul-Rahmán declared his intention of coming to Parwán, which lies to the north of Kohistán and of there concluding the final settlement of his treaty with the British Government.

In this answer Abdul-Rahmán showed himself the worthy descendant of his famous grand-sire. He did not wish to enter into useless wrangling with the English, nor did he desire even to mention those conditions which were offensive to the Afghán sovereignty. Regarding these he kept silent, but made known his assent to the secondary conditions.

A little before the despatch of his letter to the British authorities, Abdul-Rahmán had sent off several letters to the Kohistánis, in which he told them *that he had received an invitation to the throne of Afghánistán from all tribes and classes*, as also from the English Government, and

* This report was only published after Abdul-Rahmán had been proclaimed Amir.—*Author.*

† The first result of this declaration was that Sirdárs Háshim-Khán and Abdulla-Khán got alarmed about the restoration of Kandahar to Kábul, and fled to the Ghilzais.—*Author.*

that about the 12th (24th) June he intended to go to Khánábád in Kohistán.

Thus, the famous Afghán Sirdár, who had set before himself the goal of the Amirship, was not at all disposed to play the part of *nominee* of the English Government, for he based his claim on popular suffrage and on his right as a descendant of Dost-Muhammad. In this sense he acted with a tact worthy of surprise, and he thereby placed the English in the attitude of suppliants.

Abdul-Rahmán completely attained his object, and the English yielded to him in everything.

On Thursday the 10th (22nd) July 1880, Abdul-Rahmán was proclaimed Amir of Afghánistán. At a Darbár which was held for this purpose, Mr. Lepel Griffin made a speech, of which the essence is contained in the following:

[Here General Soboleff gives a long extract from the speech in question.]

Lieutenant-General Donald Stewart then turned to those assembled and made a few remarks, in which he advised them to give up their private feuds and work with the new Amir in his efforts to restore peace and quiet to Afghánistán.

Both speeches were listened to in silence.

Abdul-Rahmán's proclamation announcing his succession to the throne of Afghánistán was read throughout the city of Kábul on the following day.

The Viceroy's telegram, dated Simla, 12th (24th) July, announces the fact to the English Government.

Thus, the war operations in Northern Afghánistán were brought to an end by a peaceful compromise, satisfactory to both Afgháns and English. The issue was the result of Abdul-Rahmán's interference in the Anglo-Afghán struggle. The British Government owed it to him that it was able to come out of Afghánistán with honour.

13.—Russian sympathy with the cause of Abdul-Rahmán as a candidate for the throne of Afghánistán.

The sympathy of Russian society and of the Russian Press was unreservedly on the side of Abdul-Rahmán. Russian society was greatly interested in the issue of the Anglo-Afghán affair and paid special attention to the successes of the famous Sirdár. We here give insertion to an extract from a leading article in the *Novoye Vremya*, No. 1449, of the 11th (23rd) March 1880. In this paper appeared before any other a general outline of the successes achieved by Abdul-Rahmán. "According to our information Abdul-Rahmán is at the present time complete ruler of Afgháu-Turkistán, *i.e.*, of the country between the Amu-Daria, the Hindu-Kush, and the Paropamisus. It is not yet known whether Maimana has also come under his autho-

rity or not, but the country from Shibirkhán to the sources of the Amu is quite subject to him. This important news does not admit of the slightest doubt. The incorporation of this territory came about in this way. As is known, Abdul-Rahmán entered Afghán-Turkistán from Farghána, after passing over the Pámir and through Badákhshán. At the same time his kinsmen Isháh-Khán and Sarwar-Khán entered Bálkh, raising the population on his behalf. With the troops at his disposal, Abdul-Rahmán speedily possessed himself of Shibirkhán, Andkhui, Sar-i-Pul, Akcha, and Bálkh.

He at the same time possessed himself of Badákhshán and Kunduz. The Afghán troops mutinied and openly went over to his side. There is information to show, too, that at Takhtapul, the chief stronghold of Afghán-Turkistán, the garrison rebelled, and having driven out its own leaders, proclaimed the new pretender sovereign of the country. Ghulám-Haidar-Khán, the Governor-General, who had of late considered himself undisputed ruler of Afghán-Turkistán, fled to Bukhára. Thus, we cannot without satisfaction regard the uprising of a new sovereign in Central Asia, who can, by his position, form a zone of territory dividing the theatre of English military operations and the Khánates subject to the suzerainty of Russia. It may be hoped that the formation of an independent Afghán-Turkistán will be the guarantee of a lengthy peace relations between Russia and England in this part of the world. It is, however, to be desired that Abdul-Rahmán, who, up till now, has laboured so energetically and so rapidly for the possession of Afghán-Turkistán, should not have become less venturesome and should have deferred extending his humanitarian ideas in the direction of Kábul and towards the west. There he will meet with no support and sympathy, and will be easily defeated by the English forces. It were better that he should now occupy himself with the construction and regular re-organization of his newly-acquired sovereignty. A country which is disordered by revolts and internal dissensions, requires energetic strengthening, in order that quiet may be again introduced into it. This lesson Abdul-Rahmán has had both the time and the opportunity of learning. He can on his side consider himself safe from invasion by the English. Such invasion is only possible through the difficult Bámián Pass, and the English are now too much occupied before Kábul to undertake any operations against Afghán-Turkistán. Military operations in this direction would require the formation of a detached force of considerable strength which owing to its position would be completely isolated and dependent on its own resources."

14.—POSITION OF AFFAIRS THROUGHOUT AFGHÁNISTÁN ON GENERAL STEWART'S ARRIVAL AT KÁBUL, AND ON HIS APPOINTMENT AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN NORTHERN AFGHÁNISTÁN.

The position of affairs when General Stewart arrived at Kábul and

was appointed Commander-in Chief in Northern Afghánistán may be summarised as follows:—

I. Afghán-Turkistán.—Sirdár Abdul-Rahmán had succeeded in obtaining considerable power in Afghán-Turkistán, the population of which received him with sympathy, whilst Kohistán, as a near neighbour of Kábul, displayed every readiness to render him aid of all kinds. At Kábul itself the party which desired to see him at the head of the Government of Afghánistán, was acquiring a strength with which it was necessary to reckon. In the city many letters had been received from this Sirdár which were likely to have an exciting effect on the inhabitants.

II. Kábul and Ghazni Provinces.—The people of Kábul and its neighbourhood remained in complete uncertainty as regards their fate, and naturally, therefore, were in a very disturbed state. Who was to be Amir? And will the English soon leave the country? were questions which in the highest degree disturbed the minds of all classes of the population whether Sirdárs, priests, merchants, or the village population. All, however, united in wishing that somehow or another they might get rid of the unbidden English. The Ghazni province had again become the centre of the party that was hostile to the English. Mushk-i-Alam, the spiritual head of the Afgháns and the esteemed of the people, and Muhammad-Ján, the Commander-in-Chief of the Afghán levies, did not consider their patriotic duty quite at an end, and so they continued the obstinate struggle with the enemies of their native land. Both, however, waited to see what course Abdul-Rahmán decided on, and until this course became manifest they continued to head the party which desired to restore Yakúb-Khán to the throne.

III. The Kábul Valley.—Along the line from Kábul to the Khaibar the people had not acknowledged English supremacy and availed themselves of every opportunity of attacking the troops at the several posts. This hostile action was influenced by the priesthood, and was partly nourished by the hope that their favourite Yakúb-Khán would again be placed on the throne.

IV. The Kuram Valley.—Neither had the inhabitants of this valley recognised English authority, but rather pursued the common object of all Afgháns, the expulsion of the English from their country.

V. Kandahar Province.—With the departure of Lieutenant-General Stewart's column from Kandahar, and with the retention in the province of a weak division, the Indian Government determined to strengthen its authority by the recognition of Sirdár Shir-Ali* as sovereign of Southern Afghánistán. The new Wali† received permission to enrol troops of all three arms of the service. The English gave him several stands of arms and a battery of artillery. It was in contemplation to maintain a perma-

* A kinsman of the deceased Amir.—*Author.*

† *Wali* means sovereign.—*Author.*

nent English garrison at Kandahar and to continue the Indian railway system to that place. Thus, the idea of the Conservative Ministry of Great Britain of parcelling off Afghánistán into several states independent of each other, evidently began to be carried out.

VI. Province of Herát.—According to information which the English possessed of the condition of this province in the beginning of May, complete anarchy reigned therein. Ayúb-Khán was said to have no power at all as ruler. The English were in fact convinced that no danger of any kind threatened them in this direction. Thus, the weakness of Ayúb-Khán and the state of anarchy of his territory were amongst the exciting causes for the withdrawal of Bengal troops from Kandahar. But in point of fact, as we shall see further on, Ayúb-Khán was actively preparing to deal the English a terrible blow.

The Afghán question had become entangled in such an extraordinary degree that it was apparently a difficult matter to foretell such a combination that would only permit of a withdrawal of the English with some appearance of success from a tiresome complication, and of their leaving the country with a certain amount of honour.

15.—Summary of General Stewart's Political Administration in Southern Afghánistán.

When the massacre of the English Mission at Kábul occurred, the Anglo-Indian Government adopted energetic measures for the rapid occupation of that city and for avenging Cavagnari's murder. This, indeed, was the primary object of the campaign. But as the English Generals rightly judged, the whole question was not to be solved by the attainment of this primary object because in the Kábul catastrophe there was evident not the mere outburst of a city rabble but the uprising of the entire Afghán populace which considered itself sufficiently strong to again measure its strength in open strife with the enemy of its Fatherland. To the English it had become perfectly clear that the Campaign of 1878-79, which terminated with the Gandamak Treaty of Peace, had not convinced the Afgháns of the indisputable force of the Anglo-Indian military power. The popular voice had convicted Yakúb-Khán of weakness and certain influential personages of treachery. We know that Ayúb-Khán, ruler of Herát, and Yakúb's half brother had sent the latter a letter in which he bitterly reproached the Amir for concluding peace with the English and for not continuing the fight.

Thus the English had to enter upon a war of magnitude if they desired to bring the Afgháns to the knowledge of the complete impossibility of carrying on any struggle with them. The question was of very great importance since the undeniable weakening of the Afghán monarchy and its subjection to English influence were the sole guarantees for the quiet of the north-western frontiers of British India.

In this view the occupation of Kábul and the pacification of the Kábul and Kurám valleys were insufficient: of much greater importance were the subjugation of Kandahar and of Southern Afghánistán and the acquirement of influence both in the western provinces of Farrah and Herát and in the northern or those adjacent to the valley of the Amu-Daria.

At Kandahar and throughout the southern frontier of Afghánistán complete quiet reigned.

[Here General Soboleff quotes a Bombay telegram to the *Standard*, dated 30th August (11th September), showing the attitude of the people of Southern Afghánistán towards the English.]

The tribes living near the Khojak Pass intimated to the English their readiness to serve in their interests, whilst the Khán of Khelát placed all the resources of the country at the disposal of the English Government.

This kind of attitude on the part of the Khán of Biluchistán was extremely favourable to the English; it was very advantageous to the Khán too, as it gave him the right of enjoying rich subsidies.

Sirdár Shir-Ali-Khán was made by the English Governor of Kandahar. He was allowed great independence in the civil administration, and General Stewart had so much political tact that he merited the love and respect of the Native Governor and the confidence of the people. When the fate of Cavagnari and of his colleagues became known in the city of Kandahar, Shir-Ali expressed to General Stewart his horror at the perpetration of such a crime which would always, in his opinion, disgrace Afghánistán and the Barakzai family, and he at the same time declared his devotion to the English Government. In his answer to this declaration, General Stewart informed Shir-Ali that he cherished complete confidence in his devotion and said that he would be allowed entire independence in the civil administration of the province. Shir-Ali had at his disposal a large staff of Afghán administrators, for the Sirdárs who had fled when the English had occupied Kandahar during the first phase of the campaign, had since returned. Both they and also the chiefs of the several tribes round about were in the receipt of pensions. The national feeling of the inhabitants of the province was evidently thoroughly satisfactory, for they now enjoyed an administration, at the head of which was a representative of the old Kandahar Sirdárs. The religious party was also satisfied because the Governor of the province was an Afghán Mussulmán, and because General Stewart evinced complete respect towards the representative of their religion. The agriculturists, gardeners, and shop-keepers, who were not interfered with by the English, were also satisfied with their affairs since they were paid in cash for everything that they supplied.

General Stewart permitted Shir-Ali to organize a few local regiments, and these answered the purpose of the civil administration. It

chanced that towards the end of August 1879, *i.e.*, about the time of the massacre of the members of the English Mission at Kábul, these troops were sent by Shir-Ali to the northern portions of his province to collect the taxes. This haphazard circumstance was a very good thing for the general peace of the country, for, as a correspondent put it, "by this means was averted the possibility of disorders which could only provoke collisions between the natives of the country and our own soldiers who were naturally exasperated against the army of the Amir."

Such, then, were the general conditions under which General Stewart's column in Southern Afghánistán took part in the fresh campaign.

We know that, in the course of the first phase of the campaign, the Southern Column had detached a force for the occupation of Girishk so as to prevent communication between the province of Herát and the eastern parts of Afghánistán, and also to secure Kandahar. But when the second phase of the campaign opened, the Governor of Girishk was a friend of the English, and so in this direction General Stewart might, to a certain extent, feel easy. In the middle of October, however, the Governor of Girishk was obliged, on account of the preponderating influence of the party that was hostile to the English, to quit his post. General Stewart did not conceal the fact; indeed, he proclaimed it at a Darbár which he held at Kandahar on the 10th (22nd) October. Although also he did not ignore the circumstance that from Herát the most disquieting information had been received, General Stewart refrained from breaking up his forces and from sending troops to occupy Girishk. Meanwhile the Governor of Khelát-i-Ghilzai, who, as we have seen, had shown a friendly disposition towards General Hughes, suddenly disappeared with all his adherents. This fact is explained by the circumstance that, at this very time, as we know, the Afgháns in the northern theatre of war operations had begun to obtain an advantage over the English and had compelled them to evacuate the Shutur-Gardan Pass.

In view of all these circumstances, the positive determination of General Stewart not to move forward, cannot but be recognised as thoroughly wise from a military point of view.

Whilst making his preparations for a spring campaign and whilst the establishment of an intermediate base and the construction of the railway from the Indus to Sibi were going on, Lieutenant-General Stewart was adopting active measures for the pacification of the population of Kandahar and of the country round. His proclamation, to the effect that the existing administration would not be interfered with by the English, produced a very favourable impression amongst the people. The English could not, of course, reckon on the complete quieting down of all classes in the former capital of the Duránis. It would be sufficient for them if the richer folk, the Sirdárs, chiefs of the tribes and representatives of the trading community, were satisfied. The most fana-

tical of all were the priesthood, the former adherents of the deceased Shir-Ali, the family of Dost-Muhammad and the older ladies of the Duráni dynasty, and these constituted the element that was most hostile to the English. With them General Stewart could enter into no sort of agreement, and they remained unconditionally opposed to the new order of things. Under the influence, therefore, of these inimical elements, very frequent attacks were made on officers, and in some cases on collective parts of the Kandahar column. Thus, towards the end of October 1879 two murders were committed at Kandahar, and an attack was made on a small force under Captain Molloy, proceeding to Khelát-i-Ghilzai. On this occasion two of Captain Molloy's men were wounded.

[General Soboleff here quotes from the *Standard* the account of General Tytler being wounded by some *Gházis*.]

According to the correspondent of the paper in question, the event produced a great impression at Kandahar, but the English generally regarded it as an isolated display of fanaticism.* In the month of December, Mir-Ahmad-Khán, the head of the Popalzais, with three others, appeared in the English camp and ran *amok*. According to the report which appeared in the *Times* of the 16th (28th) December, the officers who happened to be nearest to the fanatics *ran away*, but some soldiers killed them before they had time to do any harm.

When Muhammad-Jan and Mushk-i-Alam, who had obtained some victories over General Roberts, compelled this General to shut himself up in Sherpur, the population of the southern provinces of Afghánistán, and especially of the neighbourhood of Khelát-i-Ghilzai and Zamindawár became excited in the highest degree, and at one time it was thought that a general insurrection would take place, but the idea was prompted by fear alone. English minds became perfectly quieted, as soon as it was known that General Roberts's force had been happily delivered from the combination of the Ghilzai tribes.

In the end of January 1880, a small body of armed Ghilzais collected in the neighbourhood of Khelát-i-Ghilzai, with the object of making an attack on the English detachment at that place, but, as the English papers tell us, this body dispersed directly instructions reached it from Muhammad-Ján to say that no operations were to be carried on in this direction before the spring season. Nevertheless, isolated instances of fanaticism still occurred.

The party that was hostile to the English preached about the destruction of Islám, and used every endeavour to excite the lower classes. But General Stewart did not attach any special importance to this

* We would here remark that this circumstance points to the negligence of the English and to the bad state of their sentry service. One of the Kandahar correspondents draws attention to the *freedom* with which native soldiers were permitted to carelessly wander out of camp.—*Author.*

propaganda, nor did he think it necessary to introduce a reign of military terror into the country, a course which, as we have seen, General Roberts erroneously followed.

English public opinion very highly appreciated General Stewart's course of action, and hence we read in the *Times* of the 27th October (8th November) 1879 the following on the subject:—

[Here follows an extract from the paper quoted.]

The English attached immense importance to the pacification of Southern Afghánistán. We have already spoken of the ideas which they hold, *viz.*, that, if the inhabitants of this province were to remain contented and faithful to the Indian Government, they would constitute the best bulwark of the English dominion in India. The commercial instincts of this people, and the spread of the belief amongst them that their material interests are bound up with a closer connection with British India, would, in the opinion of the English, cause them to gravitate in the required direction. The English have already pictured to themselves the reciprocal advantages to be gained by this *entente cordiale*.

[General Soboleff here quotes the opinion of a Kandahar news-writer on this subject.]

Certain other correspondents have expressed themselves to the effect that if Kandahar can enjoy quiet for a few successive years, it will become one of the largest cities in Southern Asia.

Whilst uneasy as to the fate of General Roberts's force and in a measure, as to that of the Pesháwar column, London public opinion found real consolation when it turned to examine what was going on in Southern Afghánistán.

[Here is given an extract from a leading article in the *Times* on the subject.]

We entirely agree with the statement that General Stewart really showed remarkable ability in his dealings with the people of Kandahar, and in this respect he stands out in sharp contrast to the other Generals of the Anglo-Indian armies of operation, his line of conduct differing *in toto* from that of General Roberts.

We have also seen that the population of Southern Afghánistán had, during the whole autumn and winter of 1879, preserved complete quiet, and that the authorities in India were extremely satisfied with the relations which, with the course of time, had been gradually established between Lieutenant-General Stewart and the representatives of the tribes of Southern Afghánistán.

In the spring of 1880 there began to appear signs that were altogether unexpected by the English—signs that the orderly demeanour of the inhabitants of the Duráni province would be somewhat changed. Accordingly, early in March, rumours were circulated to the effect that

certain Ghazni chiefs had appeared in Zamindawár, 66 miles to the north-west of Kandahar and Sharin, with the object of raising the local population against the English. Although the attempt led to no immediate result, it was not without its effects. The Alazais, who constitute the population of Zamindawár, became turbulent, and to quiet them Sirdár Shir-Ali sent, by order of General Stewart, two regiments headed by his own nephew. At the same time, the Ghazni leaders appeared on the Khelát-i-Ghilzai road and persuaded the inhabitants of that part of the country not to furnish the English with the provisions that they required. The result of this action was that occasional attacks were made on the foraging parties which the English sent out, and these raids were organised in a group of villages situated at a distance of 14 miles from Khelát-i-Ghilzai. To punish these people a small detachment, numbering 300 men, with two mountain guns, was sent out from Khelát-i-Ghilzai under the command of Colonel Hallowes(?). This detachment soon returned with the news that the Taraki and Sulaimán Khel tribes had combined for the purpose of showing armed resistance to the detachment if it attempted to move towards Ghazni.

A little before the instigations of the Ghazni leaders, an attempt had been made to raise the province of Zamindawár, by Yusuf-Khán, Ayúb-Khán's representative at Farrah, a province which lies almost halfway between Kandahar and Herát, but rather nearer the latter.

When the English had become satisfied about Shir-Ali's thorough fidelity to their cause, they proclaimed him *Wali* (Sovereign) of Kandahar (this was at the end of March 1880 O. S. beginning of April N.S.). This was a serious triumph for the tottering Conservative Ministry of Great Britain, and was the commencement of the sub-division of Afghánistan into several provinces.

Although Lieutenant-General Stewart had very trustworthy information about the disorder going on in the Herát province and could not reasonably suppose that Ayúb-Khán could long remain powerless, nevertheless, for the greater safe-guarding of his column in this direction, and in recognition of the authority of the faithful Governor of Kandahar, he deemed it necessary to prevail upon Shir-Ali to undertake an expedition to Farrah. To assist this expedition, the English Government presented Shir-Ali with a battery of smooth-bore guns that had been brought up from Quetta.

General Stewart paid great attention to the state of affairs in the direction of Herát, for, in his preparations for a campaign, he naturally wished to facilitate success, and he therefore used every endeavour to excite rivalry between Shir-Ali and Ayúb-Khán. Shir-Ali had, as we have seen, formed several battalions which could be employed as auxiliary forces in various matters of secondary importance. In all probability, too, these troops had been organised for the occupation of the province of

Farrah, and to guard the left flank of the English column. On the other hand, in a move towards Ghazni, Shir-Ali's troops, on being sent to a point north-west of Kandahar, would secure the rear and flank of General Stewart's column from attack.

The English authorities were disenchanted of their idea as to the attitude of the people, and apparently now quite clearly understood that the feelings of the people here towards them were the same as those entertained by Ghilzais, Wardaks, Kohistánis, and other Afghán tribes, *i.e.*, where, as elsewhere, the populace hated them with all their heart. We must here observe that the political tact of Lieutenant-General Donald Stewart in giving the Afghán people some autonomy, to a considerable degree and for a long time checked the display of actual animosity on the part of the inhabitants of Kandahar and its neighbourhood.* It was decided to put into execution the plan for the march of General Stewart's division from Kandahar to Ghazni and Kábul. This important undertaking had a two-fold object: firstly, it was necessary, above all, to destroy the combination of Afghán tribes whose chief centre was at Ghazni; secondly, it was considered very desirable to reinforce the body of Anglo-Indian troops in the neighbourhood of Kábul, because the time was drawing near for entering into final negotiations with the Afghán representatives concerning the choice of a new Amir.

General Donald Stewart's political tact.

We already know that the English commanders succeeded in their object of forming in the Kandahar province under the rule of Sirdár Shir-Ali, a native contingent, to which was served out both rifles and guns. It was supposed that this Afghán detachment, under Shir-Ali, who was *devoted* to the English, would considerably strengthen their authority in Southern Afghánistán. When the disorders at Farrah had become known and the news of the occupation of this important strategical point by Ayúb-Khán's troops had been received, General Stewart ordered Sirdár Shir-Ali to get ready his contingent for the occupation of Farrah and for the upholding of English authority thereat. But the troops of the Governor of Kandahar were at this time so few in number that of a serious movement in advance there could be no mention, and therefore it was first of all decided to despatch a force for the occupation of Bakva, the nearest province to Kandahar.

Meanwhile at Kandahar fresh details of the state of Herát affairs had arrived. Mention† was made of a second and more bloody battle between the hostile parties at Herát. The Herát troops were said to have attacked the Kábulis and to have inflicted on them a serious defeat, but later on

* On the 18th (30th) March news was received from Kandahar that civil war was still going on at Herát, because Ayúb-Khán refused to send a portion of his army to Abdul-Rahmán, whilst the adherents of the latter were holding out that he should do so.—*Author.*

† In a telegram to the *Times*, dated 26th January (7th February).—*Author.*

when the latter got their guns into position, the Herátis were in their turn terribly beaten.

The Wali's levies are defeated by the Zamindawáris owing to their being insufficiently supplied with ammunition.

On the 16th (28th) March 1880, that is, on the eve of the marching out of the head of General Stewart's column from Kandahar, Sirdár Shir-Ali-Khán, at the head of his Afghán troops, had a skirmish in Zamindawár with Abu-Bakra, aided by Wajid-Khán and the Alazai chief. As the English had not implicit confidence in the Sirdár's Afghán following, the number of breech-loading cartridges which they served out to them was very limited, and hence the said troops suffered a defeat. The Wali made a report to that effect at Kandahar, and the English were then obliged to furnish his troops with a sufficient quantity of breech-loading ammunition: whereupon Shir-Ali promised to pacify Zamindawár and other parts of Southern Afghánistán, in which there was a rising of the people.

Quiet in Southern Afghánistán only dependent on the presence of a strong force of British troops.

Thus, with the march of the Bengal troops from Kandahar to Ghazni was broken the quiet of Southern Afghánistán, and the English authorities came to be convinced that all assurances as to the establishment of order in this part of the country were merely relative. So long as the English force was a considerable one, order was preserved; when that force became reduced, the Afgháns grew bolder.

The disturbing of the peace in Southern Afghánistán greatly alarmed the English. But, as on each occasion the re-establishment of order did not call for any extraordinary exertions, they very soon became pacified and began to believe that the alarms were in reality futile, that all would go on well, that the Governor of Kandahar enjoyed absolute authority, and that, though rumours were noised abroad of the assembly of armed bands in various parts of the province, the approach of the harvest season* would put an end to all disturbances.

General Stewart's march from Kandahar to Kábul was the beginning of the withdrawal of the English forces to India. Instead of directing the Southern Column to return from Kandahar by the Bolán Pass to Sibi and Sukkur, as was in the first instance planned, the Head-Quarter-Staff of the Indian Army considered it more advantageous, in a political sense, to order it to march back by Ghazni. It was imagined that, by the adoption of this route, two important objects would be attained; firstly, it would be possible to inflict a serious blow at the centre of the combination of the Afghán tribes; and, secondly, a very

* Drought had caused distress amongst the Narzai and Achakzai tribes, many of whom had driven their flocks and herds to pasture in the neighbourhood of Kandahar.—*Author.*

considerable body of troops would thereby be concentrated at Kábul, a most necessary step in view of the swift successes of Sirdár Abdul-Rahmán in Northern Afghánistán.

The victory of Ahmad-Khel produced a great impression on those Ghazniites who had taken no part in the fight, but who awaited its issue.

We should here note that the Afghán tribes to the south of Ghazni took part in the battle of Ahmad-Khel.

As for some days previously attacks had been made on the line of communications of the Southern Column, during which the telegraph wires had been cut, it was some time before news was received of the success of the movements of General Stewart towards Ghazni. This circumstance produced a certain degree of uneasiness both in India and in England. The town of Ghazni was occupied by an advanced guard of cavalry on the 8th (20th) April. A small body of English troops then moved to a distance of 8 miles beyond Ghazni, and sent thence the first tidings of the victory which had been gained over the Afgháns. This news was forwarded, not through Kandahar, but by means of the *heliograph* to General Ross's detachment, and so on to Kábul.

Although, according to English telegrams, General Stewart's two victories had produced a profound impression on the Afgháns, a few days after the occupation of Ghazni, there appeared, before this city, an Afghán levy, consisting of Sulaimán-Khels and Andaraks, of a strength of from 6,000 to 7,000 men. This body took up a strong position near the village of Ortsu, 8 miles from Ghazni.

[A short account is here given of this fight.]

Although the victories gained by General Stewart near Ghazni had shown the natives the superiority of European troops over bands of undisciplined men, the rapid evacuation of Ghazni and the failing to leave an English garrison in the fort, were regarded by the Afgháns as a sign of the weakness of the English force. In Asia, European notions of war are not understood, and if an enemy evacuates a portion of a conquered country, the inhabitants speedily forget their defeat and the influence of previous victories quickly vanishes.

As soon, therefore, as it became known that General Stewart was leaving Ghazni, and was hastening towards Kábul, Muhammad-Ján threw himself on the road between Ghazni and Kábul, with the object of essaying fresh fortune in the open field. But his intentions were not attended with success.

[General Soboleff, after making mention of the overthrow of an Afghán force, of 6,000 men, under Mushk-i-Alam, speaks of the arrangements made by General Stewart for the formation of a native administration at Ghazni, observing that the selection of Muhammad-Alam-Khán as Governor of Ghazni, "was a very happy one, because this Sirdár was respected both by the Ghazniites and by the Hazáras."]

Although General Stewart was now marching unopposed towards Kábul, he had quitted Ghazni without utterly routing the Afgháns and without completely quieting the country. *In Asia the retirement from a place once occupied is almost always looked upon in the light of a defeat.* The proud Afgháns very well understood that General Stewart's column, surrounded as it was by numerous hostile bands, could not exist long at Ghazni. It was indeed obliged to withdraw, and we therefore permit ourselves to express the opinion that *General Stewart's movement on Ghazni and Kábul was one of the grossest strategical errors of the Indian Head-Quarter-Staff.* This movement, whilst it did not disperse the levies at Ghazni that were hostile to the English, on the one hand rendered it necessary to bring up a Bombay division to Kandahar, and this weakened the general defences of Southern India, and, on the other, added to the number of troops on the Kábul plain, causing an extra drain on the already limited store of provisions. We need, too, hardly say that this expedition cost a great deal of money. We, therefore, can perfectly understand the line of reasoning of an eye-witness of the fresh campaign, as conveyed in a letter to the *Times* dated from Kábul.

[Here follows an extract from this letter.]

The Afghán levies of Muhammad-Ján opposed the advance of Lieutenant-General Stewart's column, and although this column gained several important successes, the skilful Afghán leaders adroitly avoided a decisive defeat and husbanded their military strength. It may be supposed that one of the chief causes why General Stewart did not hold on to Ghazni before marching with the rest of his forces direct on Kábul was due to a belief *that the combination of the Afghán tribes had considerable forces at its disposal,* and that therefore it would have been dangerous to expose an English garrison in Ghazni to an attack in force. Although General Stewart's march from Kandahar to Kábul was a remarkable military feat, it led to no political or military result, for the Afgháns in the country through which General Stewart's column marched maintained their threatening coalition.

The first object, that of inflicting a blow at Ghazni and at Muhammad-Ján's levies, was not attained, at least in the measure on which the English military authorities had counted. The Anglo-Indian force had, in fact, only made a rapid march from Kandahar to Kábul, taking with it the garrison of Khelát-i-Ghilzai, and it was not in a condition to quiet the tribes lying along this route. The Afgháns, having attempted at Ahmad-Khel to block the English line of advance, met with a defeat and retired. But as soon as the English troops had crossed the Logar Valley, the Ghazniities once more became complete masters of their own country.

As soon, too, as General Stewart's march had come to an end, the excitement of the population of the Kábul valley assumed threatening proportions, and, as we have seen, General Roberts was ready to again adopt a defensive position at Sherpur.

We cannot avoid here inviting the attention of our readers to the very curious fact that, whereas when the Kandahar column under General Stewart halted in the southern part of the Logar Valley, the inhabitants remained quiet; with each fresh appearance of troops under General Roberts, the same people became excited. This circumstance explains better than any other the personal character of the English general whom the Afgháns so hated.

It would be very difficult to determine what would have been the results of a fresh rise in the spirit of the Afghán people had there not opportunely arrived from behind the Hindu-Kush, to the supremest good fortune of the English and to their aid, the famous Sirdár Abdul-Rahmán who had lived for so long a time in Russian-Turkistán under the protection of our Governor-General.

Abdul-Rahmán gave a fresh turn to the Anglo-Afghán struggle, and English honour, we make bold to think, was saved, thanks to him alone.

16.—Sirdár Shir-Ali-Khán, Wali of Kandahar.

This Sirdár is the son of Migirdil-Khán, the youngest of the five sons of Painda-Khán. In the beginning of the present century, the five brothers were the joint rulers of the Duráni sovereignty. Shir-Ali-Khán of Kandahar was cousin to his name-sake, the late Amir of Kábul. He was born in 1825, and well remembers the Anglo-Afghán War of 1839-1842, when, with the approach of the English troops to Kandahar, he was obliged to fly with his father and uncles into Persian territory. On his return to Kandahar in 1842, he passed the first years of his manhood in the vicissitudes which are characteristic of Afghán life, *i.e.*, in alternate declarations of allegiance to the ruling power and subsequent attempts to rebel against it. When the Amir Shir-Ali-Khán possessed himself of Kandahar in 1864, the Sirdár became his devoted friend and adherent, and, in spite of the ingratitude and suspicion of which he became the object, he remained Shir-Ali's friend to the last, although the Amir, subsequent to 1864, suffered terrible defeats at the hands of his elder brothers and of his nephew Abdul-Rahmán-Khán. At the time that Shir-Ali the Amir possessed only Herát, Shir-Ali the Sirdár remained with him. According to English statements the latter was the real leader of the Herát army which obtained Kandahar again for the Amir, and he it was who performed the exploit *falsely ascribed to Yakúb-Khán* (*who was a mere boy at the particular time*) that gained for this weak being the undeserved reputation for bravery, a reputa-

tion which to a considerable degree brought about his fall.* On the pacification of Afghánistán, Sirdár Shir-Ali-Khán was appointed Governor of the provinces outlying from Kábul, but some years later on he was removed through the intrigues of the Kábul party. He remained up to the year 1878 without employment at Kábul, but his constant faithfulness was so prized by the Amir that he was sent with the Mustafa in the capacity of envoy to General Aide-de-Camp Von Kaufmann, 1st, Governor-General of Russian-Turkistán. When he returned from Táshkand the unfortunate Amir was no longer alive, and Yakúb-Khán had become the ruler of Afghánistán. When the young Amir started for Gandamak to conclude a treaty of peace with the English, Sirdár Shir-Ali-Khán remained at Kábul as Regent, and performed the difficult duty imposed upon him with merit. The city and troops, notwithstanding the cruel fate which awaited their fatherland, remained quiet in the Amir's absence. On Yakúb-Khán's return to Kábul, Sirdár Shir-Ali-Khán was appointed Governor of Kandahar, but the Amir intended to shortly put in his place the boy Musa-Khán, his eldest son, and to attach to his person as guardian one of his own Sirdárs.

The fresh war with Afghánistán found Shir-Ali-Khán Governor of Kandahar. The English did not interfere with him and assert that his behaviour to them was at this difficult time *satisfactory*.

[Here follows a brief testimony from an English correspondent at Kandahar shewing that Shir-Ali was faithful to the English cause.]

The English were, in fact, thoroughly satisfied with the devotion and zeal displayed by the Governor of Kandahar. We allow ourselves to here observe that we have doubts about the proposed substitution of the Amir's son for Shir-Ali as Governor of Kandahar, and we rather think that the story was manufactured by the Sirdár himself with the object of diverting the attention of the English from the real state of the case. At the particular time spoken of, Yakúb-Khán was in arrest and was subjected to the severe treatment of the English authorities, and therefore it was a matter of the greatest advantage to Shir-Ali-Khán to make out that he was in disgrace with the Amir. He bitterly complained to the English that Yakúb-Khán, having in view his removal, had not given him the wherewithal to organize his troops in such a way as would have been of service both to the Amir and to the English. In a word, he showed himself to be thoroughly devoted to the British Government. The English, therefore, liked him, strengthened his authority, and did their best to help him with the organisation of native levies. From India they sent up 2,000 smooth-bore muskets and a battery of six-pounder smooth-bore guns.

[Here General Soboleff quotes a Calcutta telegram, dated 24th February (7th March 1880.]

* *Times'* correspondence dated 29th March (10th April) 1880. The English used every endeavour to throw discredit on Yakúb-Khán in a measure to justify themselves from the reproach of having unjustly banished the Amir to India.—*Author.*

All of these were placed at the disposal of the Governor of Kandahar for the armament of his troops. As he was already in possession of 1,000 muskets, he immediately proceeded to organise his forces, which consisted of 3,000 infantry, 3,000 cavalry, and a battery of artillery. In the opinion of the English, this force was sufficient to preserve order throughout the province of Kandahar. With regard to this province, from September 1879 to the end of March 1880, the English authorities did all they could to prove to its inhabitants that their country was gradually being disconnected from the rest of Afghánistán, and that the province was henceforth to be a separate State under an English protectorate.

It seemed then to the English that the moment had arrived for the final carrying out of the plan they had devised for the parcelling out of Afghánistán.

A Kandahar telegram dated 24th March (5th April) communicates the following: "Colonel St. John took with him the Viceroy's letter, addressed to Sirdár Shir-Ali-Khán, in which he is told that Her Majesty has been pleased to withdraw Her superior authority over the province of Kandahar, the boundaries of which would be defined in a very short time. Shir-Ali would receive the title of "Wali." The Viceroy's letter went on to intimate that a railway would be constructed as far as Kandahar, where English troops would be permanently stationed, and where an English Political Agent would reside."

A Kandahar telegram dated 30th March (11th April) communicates the information that "all measures had been taken for the *pacification of the country* by acknowledging Shir-Ali as the *independent* ruler of Kandahar; that the formal announcement of these measures would not be delayed; that the ordinance relating thereto would be drawn up in India, and it was believed that the same would be accepted by the inhabitants of the province of Kandahar.

This decision on the part of the British Government coincided with the period fixed for the march of General Stewart's column towards Ghazni. It was supposed that this column was strong enough to destroy the combination of the Afghán tribes, and that the results of this would be the complete settlement of Afghán affairs. On the other hand, the Conservative Ministry, which was sensible that the soil was falling from beneath its feet, hastened to extract from the Afghán struggle some evidently practical result.

For the formal proclamation of Shir-Ali as sovereign of the Kandahar province, the Viceroy's gifts were awaited. These gifts at length arrived, and on the 29th April (11th May) the imposing ceremony of proclaiming the independence of the province of Kandahar took place. At a parade of the British troops, the Viceroy's letter to the new Sovereign was read aloud. On the conclusion of this political act, the representative of Great Britain, Colonel St. John, declared that the

Wali (Sovereign) would enjoy the right of having his own Council and of coining money bearing his own image and superscription. In the course of his speech, Colonel St. John dwelt upon the special political importance of the detaching of Kandahar from the rest of Afghánistán, and showed that the creation of an *independent* State was really no novelty, but a return to the former order of things which obtained in the earlier days of the Barakzai dynasty.

The Viceroy's gifts consisted of an exquisite sword and belt, of a watch studded with diamonds, a gold chain, of a hanging clock, a beautiful silver vase, and of various silk and velvet stuffs. Lieutenant-General Primrose, Commanding the Kandahar Division, girded the *Wali* with the sword and belt, during which ceremony a battery of artillery fired a salute of 21 guns. The whole affair terminated with a speech by Shir-Ali-Khán, in which the newly-made Sovereign expressed his gratitude to the British Government and declared that in order to relieve the population he intended to abolish two taxes—the poll-tax on all who were not Duránis, and the impost on copper coin.

On the 1st (13th) May the *Wali* paid an official visit to General Primrose and to Colonel St. John, during which troops lined the road from his house up to the English camp, and both at his arrival and on his departure artillery salutes were fired.

In a word, everything was done to show the people that Shir-Ali had been made a Sovereign independent of every one but the British Government. A beginning had been made to the breaking-up of Afghánistán.

17.—Political events at Kandahar from the date of the installation of the *Wali* to the period of the collapse of his administration.

The Wali Shir-Ali-Khán makes a tour through his dominions.

In order to quiet the line of communications connecting Kandahar and Quetta, Shir-Ali-Khán, in the month of April, made a tour of the provinces situated between this line, Pishin, and the country of the independent Pathán tribes to the east of Pishin. Two large bands of these Patháns were dispersed without a shot and their leaders arrested. At the same time the sword, horse, and rifle of Major Wadby, who was killed at Dubrai, were recovered, as also some of the war *matériel* and camels taken from the English on the same occasion. All this was effected through the unaided exertions of Shir-Ali-Khán. Having decided on an expedition against some Patháns who had taken up a strong position in a small fort 20 miles from Chaman, but not hoping for success with his own troops alone, the Governor of Kandahar turned to the English with a request that they would assist him. The aid given comprised two companies and two mountain guns. Directly the occupants of the fort saw the guns they surren-

dered and the English force returned to Chaman. "This," wrote a Kandahar correspondent, under date 26th April (8th May) "shows that we are resolved to support the Wali's authority, and will adopt, in order to maintain order, whatever measures may be necessary. The Wali seems to thoroughly understand the situation, and does not manifest a desire to make unnecessary appeals for our aid. Unfortunately his troops are scarcely sufficient in number to make use of the 2,000 rifles and the six guns presented to him by the Viceroy of India, for almost the whole of his forces have to remain on the far side of the Helmand in order to prevent the appearance in considerable numbers of noisy agitators from the direction of Herát."

Almost at the same time two parties of *Gházis** took up a position on a steep hill on the road between Kandahar and Khelát-i-Ghilzai. They were attacked by men of a Biluch Regiment and suffered a complete defeat, losing 14 men killed and 80 taken prisoners. During the same period some of the Khelát-i-Ghilzai garrison were marched to villages where property taken by Afgháns from English transport trains was collected. The villages were surrounded, their headmen were arrested, and the property was recovered. Nevertheless cases of murder and maiming of English parties went on. Amongst these was that of Captain Garnett. He was wounded in the shoulder close to Kandahar on the 27th April (9th May).

The troops of the garrison of Kandahar are paraded in celebration of the birth-day of Her Majesty the Queen-Empress.

On the 17th (29th) May 1880, on the occasion of the celebration of Queen Victoria's birth-day, a parade of the Anglo-Indian troops took place at Kandahar. At this parade "His Highness" the Wali was present. The force assembled comprised five regiments of infantry, three of cavalry, and three batteries. The troops marched past, and at the saluting base were both General Primrose and the Wali.

The calm preceding the storm in Southern Afghánistán.

A calm reigned in Southern Afghánistán, but it was only the calm which precedes the storm. The British Commanders had begun to receive reports, at first very obscure, regarding the actual intentions of Sirdar Ayúb-Khán, the ruler of Herát, and of his desire to take a part in the Anglo-Afghán struggle.

Let us now turn to a description of Ayúb-Khán's action up to the commencement of open collision with the English.

Shir-Ali of Kandahar is made the bulwark between Herát and Kandahar.

Ayúb-Khán had actually begun his march, had occupied Farrah, and had arrived within a few marches of the Helmand. The British authorities instructed Shir-Ali to try conclusions with the Herát adventurer, and imagined that the army which they had organised for him would be

* Or warriors for the faith.—*Author.*

sufficient. But all at once they recollected that this army was composed exclusively of Afgháns, and that it included a regiment which had already displayed its dissatisfaction with the existing order of things. The inhabitants of the province of Kandahar were also in an excited state. The British Generals had already experienced the strength of the Afghán levies that were led by the Afghán General of artillery, Muhammad-Ján, but on the present occasion the question had become much more serious. Ayub-Khán was at the head of regular troops provided with a considerable force of artillery. On his side, too, was popular sympathy, for he, like Muhammad-Ján, acted in the name of Yakúb-Khán, a name beloved throughout Afghánistán. Muhammad-Ján might, moreover, march from Ghazni to his assistance, followed by a powerful and numerous force. It was accordingly decided to support the Wali's "army" with an Anglo-Indian brigade from Kandahar.

We have seen what was the result of this combination of forces.

No one benefited more than Abdul-Rahmán by this circumstance for the English withdrew nearly all their demands.

It had apparently become clear to them that it was expedient for them to finish with the Afghán question as quickly as possible and to do all they could to evacuate the country.

The question as to the separation of Kandahar was finished the very moment the army of the Wali of Kandahar went over to the side of the enemies of the English.

[Here General Soboleff inserts a telegram to the *Times*, dated 6th (18th) July 1880.]

The information communicated in this official telegram, in so far as it related to the infantry portion of the Wali's troops, was, as we have already seen, perfectly incorrect. Thus the infantry could not have fled on account of insufficiency of provisions, seeing that they had taken with them from Girishk all the provisions which had been stored there for them as well as for the Anglo-Indian brigade. Consequently, the rations would have been more than sufficient for them. The going over of the Wali's troops to the side of Sirdár Ayúb-Khán produced such a strong impression on the English, that they determined to retreat three marches further from the Helmand. There they received repeated information regarding the growth of Ayúb-Khán's troops in the direction of the capital of Southern Afghánistán.

The infantry portion of the Wali's treacherous troops.

[The events leading up to the rout of the Wali's traitorous forces are now detailed.

With regard to the attack made by General Burrows's brigade on the Wali's levies, General Soboleff writes thus :]

From this account of the affair between General Burrows's brigade and the Wali's infantry regiments, we are drawn to the conclusion that complete success lay with the Afgháns. The plan they had formed of joining Ayúb-Khán's army was brilliantly executed. With the loss of six useless guns, of which, however, their rear-guard had made good use, the Afgháns quietly withdrew, carrying off with them the bulk of the supplies that had been stored for the use of the English troops.

Engagement between the Wali of Kandahar's mutinous soldiers and General Burrows's brigade.

Thus all the calculations of the English Generals and Political Agents were upset, and the army of the Wali of Kandahar had disappeared like a soap bubble. The troops of the newly-formed sovereignty of Southern Afghánístán had not only not defended the western frontier of this State from the Afghán forces operating from Herát, but had openly declared against their own sovereign, considering it a reproach to serve a person who helped the English in everything. On the other hand, these levies knew of the march on Kandahar of Sirdár Ayúb-Khán, the ruler of Herát and brother of the unfortunate Amir Yakúb-Khán; they knew, too, that Ayúb was the sworn enemy of the English, and they therefore willingly went over to his side. The English were once more convinced that all Afgháns without exception hated them most cordially, and that it was impossible for them to form a party in Afghánístán that would be in any degree devoted to the interests of the British Government. The attempt to form a separate state of the province of Kandahar had conspicuously failed, and we are extremely surprised that the English, who had known the Afgháns for so long a time and had so often encountered them, were so devoid of a real knowledge of this people.

Failure of the English to set up an independent sovereign at Kandahar.

Our readers need not be surprised when we remark that with the fall of the Wali the English began to concoct the most impossible and even absurd plans regarding the future construction of Kandahar. There were serious voices which proposed that Kandahar should be given up to Ayúb-Khán, who was also to be the ruler of Herát. And this suggestion was made at a time when Ayúb had declared himself to be the most bitter and irreconcileable enemy of the British Government.

Every step taken by them with respect to Afghánístán and which they considered most answered to certain circumstances, proved to be most inopportune. Kandahar and the provinces adjoining enjoyed under Lieutenant-General Donald Stewart rest for a considerable period. This appeared to the English to be a matter of very great significance, and they conceived that the Duránís, inhabiting Southern-Afghánístán, were well disposed towards them, and could easily serve as a means to the subdivision of the country into several small States, to the end that this fanatical country might be weakened. As soon as the idea occurred to them

that it was possible to create a separate Afghán State with its capital at Kandahar, the English resolved to strengthen the authority of the local Governor, Sirdár Shir-Ali, and in order that he might be possessed of the more importance, they began to enrol a native army. Shir-Ali deported himself with great tact, and in all serious matters turned to the British authorities for advice. The ranks of his army gradually filled and comprised all three arms of the service, whereupon small arms and ordnance were served out by the English. During the December events before Kábul, when General Roberts's force was being attacked by the Afghán levies under the leadership of the famous Muhammad-Ján, order was preserved in Southern Afghánistán, notwithstanding that its population was in an excited state. We know that Shir-Ali more than once quieted his frontier provinces by despatching regiments to them. He rendered the English especial service by holding the Zamindawár country, for he thereby enabled General Stewart to refrain from occupying points to the west of Kandahar.

18.—Short sketch of the life of Sirdár Ayúb-Khán.

Sirdár Ayúb-Khán is the son of the late Amir Shir-Ali-Khán and is half brother of Yakúb-Khán, the recently-deposed Afghán Amir. Ayúb was born in 1851,* his mother being the daughter of the Momand ruler of Lálpura. He is distinguished for his great devotion to his brother Yakúb, for in 1867-68, when yet a boy, he entered Yakúb-Khán's army and took part in the campaign against Abdul-Rahmán, which terminated in the securing of the throne of Afghánistán for Shir-Ali-Khán. In 1871 Yakúb-Khán fell into disfavour, and flying from Kábul went to Seistán. After collecting a small band of adherents, amongst whom his brother Ayúb occupied a conspicuous place, Yakúb-Khán went to Herát, which he attacked, driving out the Governor whom his father had appointed. He afterwards became the independent ruler of the province of Herát, and Afghánistán was thus divided into two distinct sovereignties. It goes without saying that this arrangement was extremely disadvantageous to Shir-Ali-Khán, for his proved weakness could only lead to the most serious consequences. On the one side he saw the exertions of the Anglo-Indian Government to secure a decisive influence on his foreign policy, and their attempts to frighten him with a possible inroad of Russian troops; on the other he became conscious of the rapid development of Russian power in the valley of the Amu-Daria, or, in other words, on the very outskirts of his sovereignty. These indications could not therefore but create in the mind of the Amir a doubt about the solidity of his throne. It was consequently not unnatural that he should desire to again

* According to other information he was born in June 1848.—*Author.*

become sole ruler of Afghánistán. The English by secret negotiations brought about a truce between the father and his rebel son, and the latter returned to Kábul in 1874. Shir-Ali immediately ordered his arrest and incarceration. Ayúb-Khán, who was now 23 years of age, declared himself ruler of Herát, whereupon Shir-Ali sent an army there under Omar-Khán. The end was that Herát was taken, Ayúb became a fugitive in Persia, and Omar-Khán was declared to be the Governor of the Herát province. As soon as he appeared in Persia, Sirdár Ayúb-Khán was courteously received by the Sháh's Government, and he was granted a pension.

From 1874 to 1878 he lived at Mashad, the capital of Persian Khurássán, but when in the autumn of 1878 Shir-Ali quitted Kábul and nominated as Regent his eldest son and former prisoner, Yakúb-Khán, Ayúb left Mashad and appeared once more as the ruler of Herát. Shir-Ali-Khán died at Mazár-i-Sharif in Afghán-Turkistán on the 21st February (5th) March 1879,* and Yakúb-Khán ascended the throne of Afghánistán. As soon as Ayúb had consolidated his power at Herát, he besought his brother not to conclude a treaty of peace with the English, but to resolutely fight, hoping for success in the end. He further sent him troops from Herát, but these reinforcements reached Kábul after the signing of the Treaty of Gandamak. On hearing of this termination of the war, Ayúb in a letter bitterly reproached his brother.

Reported despatch of breech-loading small-arms to Herát.

Meanwhile there arrived at Herát the consignment of breech-loading small-arms which were intended for the armament of the English Garrison which was soon to arrive in that city. These rifles became the booty of one of the Herát regiments *en route* to Kábul. Almost at the same time it become known, too, at Kábul that amongst the property of the English Mission were a number of printed copies of the Kurán. Now in the eyes of the fanatic Mussalmáns the printing of Muhammad's Holy Book is a great piece of sacrilege. Above all it was noised abroad that the Mission had a number of Bibles translated into the Arabic language. Infuriated and at the same time dreading that this Political Mission of the English might become a religious *propaganda*, a crowd of Kábul Mullahs went to the Amir's palace and showered energetic imprecations on him for having allowed the English to come to the capital of Afghánistán.

The Herát regiments make a disturbance.

At the same time the Herát regiments arrived and began to demand the issue of their pay. These regiments which had not yet encountered the force of the English arms went over to the people who were opposed to the English.

* Incorrect according to Dr. Yavórski's account.—W. E. G.

As soon as the Herát regiments reached Kábul they assumed an attitude hostile towards the English Mission which was established there, and on the 22nd August (3rd) September 1879, the date of the massacre of the members of the British Embassy, they openly declared war against the hated European.*

According to English information, Ayúb-Khán, during the Anglo-Afghán campaign of 1878-79 and for the greater part of the second campaign which we are now reviewing, remained at Herát under the most difficult circumstances. The English represented him as a puppet with whom the Heráti and Kábuli regiments stationed at Herát amused themselves in turns. They held him to be weak, boastful, and incapable. The idea that Ayúb could march upon Kandahar aroused amongst them a hearty laugh. Finally they displayed towards him the most palpable contempt, so much so that they sent against him the "army" of the Wali and six unserviceable guns.

19.—Summary of the state of affairs at Herát from the period of the Kábul massacre to the time of Ayúb-Khán's advance against Kandahar.

Ayúb-Khán is said to have had a share in bringing about the events leading to the Kábul massacre.

In the official circles of British India Ayúb-Khán was regarded as one who had incited if he did not help to lead the popular movement at Kábul.† Englishmen generally considered Ayúb-Khán in the light of an ambitious person who was at heart envious of his brother's power, in fact that he was an intriguer.‡

Russian intrigues at Herát.

Towards the end of August 1879, the *Standard* received a communication from Lahore to the following effect: Some merchants of Singapur trading with Central Asia had spread abroad a rumour that the hostile movement at Kábul, directed against the English, was the result of *Russian intrigues:* that Ayúb-Khán, Governor of Herát, had become a rebel and was about to seize his brother's throne; that Russian agents had for several months prior to the massacre of the English at Kábul been zealously working at Herát, and had incited Ayúb to propose to his brother to declare war, promising their aid; that to the Herát troops had been entrusted the organisation of a rebellion against the Amir and the English. The correspondent added that the Singapur merchants are usually well aware of what is going on in Afgháuistán, and that consequently the news was *correct.*

* There is some confusion in the account of the murder of Major Cavagnari's Mission. It was at first thought that the instigators were the Herát regiments, then they were held to be Kábulis, and again they were called Herátis.—*Author.*

† Telegram from Simla, dated 27th August (8th September 1879).—*Author.*

‡ Correspondence from Kandahar.—*Author.*

In the first issue of the present exposition we said that immediately after the massacre of the English Mission at Kábul, in the beginning of September 1879, there were manifested throughout Afghánistán distinct signs of a hostile attitude towards the English, and that in the Herát province, which is not ethnographically connected with Kábul, this enmity appeared to have especial force, calling forth a revolutionary movement on the part of the Kábul troops, who attacked the house of General Fakir-Ahmad-Khán (a man devoted to Yakúb and to Ayúb), pillaging his house and killing the General himself. The occurrences of this very dark period have not up to the present date been cleared up.

The Herát province evinces especial hostility to the English.

On the 6th (18th) September news reached Ali-Khel that an insurrection had broken out at Herát and that the troops had murdered the Civil and Military authorities. The next day the Amir sent a despatch to General Roberts confirming this report.

The facts relating to the insurrection that was going on at Herát and in Northern-Afghánistán are narrated in an official despatch of the Viceroy's, dated 8th (20th) September 1879.

Although the Herát province is not a component part of Kábulistán, nevertheless it also evinced an evident hostility towards the English. We have already spoken of the part played by Herát and Ayúb-Khán in the matter of the murder of the English at Kábul.

The people of Herát prove hostile to the English.

The question as to the causes of that hostility would be a very interesting one to solve. We know that Ayúb-Khán wrote to his brother Yakúb reproaching him for having concluded a treaty with the English which was derogatory to the Afgháns. From this it is evident that the ruler of Herát was in favour of the political independence of Afghánistán, and therefore was naturally an enemy of the English. On the other hand, it is known that Fakir-Ahmad-Khán was a true servant of Ayúb, for he shared his fate in 1875, when Ayúb-Khán was, during the life-time of his father Shir-Ali, obliged to quit his own country and to hide on the borders of Persia. Since, therefore, Ayúb-Khán remained ruler of Herát personally and was not a sufferer, it may be presumed that Fakir-Ahmad-Khán was killed by the Kábulis because he had not proved an energetic adherent of the Afghán national party.

This hostility probably due to the terms of the Treaty of Gandamak.

Thus, from the very commencement of the new Afghán war the English were prone to judge Ayúb-Khán as an individual who was but a medium of intrigue. In a letter dated London, 31st August (12th September) 1879, we read: "the dread exists that Russia, without interfering openly in the war, can cause the English much unnecessary embarrassment. It permeates all classes of English

Neglect of the English to attach sufficient importence to Ayúb-Khán's position at Herát.

society. Never has the slightest movement of the Russians in Central Asia excited so much alarm and suspicion as now. In the minds of Ministers there is no longer a doubt but that the anti-English movement in Afghánistán has been *prompted by the Russians*. Every fresh step of the Russians in Central Asia causes here a sort of scare. To the simple, inquiring folk, such steps are regarded as possessed of vast political importance. For example, news comes that a Russian Colonel escorted by a score or so of Cossacks is *en route* from Fort Peter Alexander to the Hindu-Kush, and immediately the idea is formed that the said Colonel has gone to Herát to confer with Ayúb-Khán. Regarding this personage there here exists the conviction that he is strongly committed to the Russians and has for a long time been obeying their behests. Great importance has been attached to the circumstance that the Colonel* is the same person who visited Bálkh at the beginning of 1878, when it was proposed to march a Russian army to Afghánistán. To what has been stated it will suffice to add that the *simple approach to Herát of a Russian Staff-Officer escorted by some Cossacks is here considered to be, in the present state of affairs in Afghánistán, an event very dangerous for the English.*

Russian intrigue powerful throughout Afghánistán.

The influence of Herát on the terrible animosity of the Afgháns against the English was recognised by the leaders of the Muhammadan world, and Ayúb-Khán gradually acquired renown as a true fighter for the religion of the Prophet. The whole essence therefore of the matter is comprised in a struggle with the unbelievers (the hated English) and not in Russian intrigues as the Conservative Ministry of Great Britain declared.

Herát, a great centre of Afghán animosity against the English.

The English, in fact, did not understand the true meaning of the disorders which occurred at Herát during September 1879, and displayed some surprise when "in spite of the insurrection at Herát Ayúb-Khán kept his post as Governor-General."†

The true meaning of the disorders at Herát during September 1879 not understood by the English.

In their rage the English had thought of interfering in Herát disorders, and in Calcutta Government spheres it has been conceived that the progress of events in Afghánistán must compel England to move General Stewart's division from Kandahar to Herát, both in order to "put down an insurrection" which threatened to assume the most serious turn, because the Amir Yakúb-Khán did not enjoy that amount of popularity in Southern Afghánistán necessary to paralyse Russian designs directed against Marv and Herát.

* Either Colonel Matvaiyeff or Colonel Grodekoff.—*Translator.*

† Telegram from Ali-Khel, dated 8th (20th) September, to the *Daily News.*—*Author.*

Ayúb-Khán's communications with Kandahar.

In the beginning of October Ayúb-Khán reported at Kandahar that order had been restored at Herát and that all was quiet there. In the telegram to the *Standard*, in which this news is communicated, it is not stated to whom the Herát ruler addressed this communication, whether to the English military authorities or to one or other of the native rulers of Kandahar.

Towards the end of October 1879 there spread amongst the English a rumour to the effect that Ayúb-Khán had been deprived of the rulership of Herát, and that the Afghán regular forces had abandoned that city and were marching towards the eastern provinces of Afghánistán. On the 7th (19th) November an official telegram from the Viceroy of India contradicted the report as to the flight of the Afghán forces, and stated that "Ayúb-Khán has really been shut up in the citadel by his troops and that he is a *prisoner*."

Statements regarding Ayúb-Khán's weak position at Herát put forward by the Afgháns to turn English attention from that question.

Thus whilst the English held Yakúb-Khán as a prisoner, it was said that the Afgháns themselves had made his brother, Ayúb-Khán, one also. The news as to the weakness of the latter was in reality very mistaken, and one can only be astonished that the English authorities should have given full credence to such information, which was disseminated by the natives with the express purpose of lulling the attention of the said authorities in the direction of Herát.

Effect at Herát of the news of the Kábul massacre.

On the 2nd (14th) November there came from Teherán a short but not unimportant despatch regarding the actual state of affairs at Herát. In this it was stated that Afghán merchants, who had arrived at Teherán from Herát, had reported that the news of the massacre of the English embassy at Kábul had been received at Herát on the 1st (13th) September and had been heard with great enthusiasm by the inhabitants, who expressed their readiness to defend Herát to the very last; that Ayúb-Khán had in the city 4,800 infantry armed with English rifles, and 4,500 cavalry; that he was displaying great exasperation against the English; that the fortifications of Herát had not been put into repair, and that no Russian agents were present in that city.

State of affairs in the province of Farrah.

In the province of Farrah, which lies between Herát and Kandahar, Mir-Afzul was Governor, and he had been called to that post in a measure by the English themselves. From a despatch dated 31st October (12th November) 1879 from the Viceroy of India we know that whilst Mir-Afzul was still at Farrah he exercised no authority there.

A telegram* from Kábul dated 11th (23rd) November observed that the principal Afghán Sirdárs (with few exceptions), who had gone over to the side of General Roberts, the conqueror of Kábul, had stated that the situation of Ayúb-Khán at Herát was hopeless.

But at the end of the same month a rumour reached Kandahar that the same Ayúb-Khán, at the head of 12,000 infantry and 3 cavalry regiments, had left Herát with the object of compelling the English to quit the capital of Southern Afghánistán. In a telegram from this city giving the above news, it was observed that the move was *not* unlikely, but at the same time it was doubtful whether Ayúb-Khán's forces had decided to come into collision with the English troops, for that money in Afghánistán, as in all other countries, constituted the sinews of war, and that the ruler of Herát had none, though it was very possible he had been forced to attempt something of the kind and looked to Persia for assistance.

The report of the march of an Afghán force from Herát coincided with the first energetic action of Muhammad-Ján before Kábul which he directed against General Roberts' detachment. On the 29th November (11th December) the Afgháns won their first battle against General Roberts, and on the 1st (13th) December General Stewart received orders to send an envoy to Ayúb-Khán to tell him that he must hold Herát *in the interests of the English*,† if he wished to remain there as ruler. It was evident, then, that the English were afraid of concerted action on the part of Ayúb-Khán and Muhammad-Ján.

Immediately after this, news was received that Ayúb-Khán had left Herát with a large force at the invitation of the Chiefs of the Afghán masses, which had collected before Kábul, and that in the province of Farrah there was a great gathering of Afghán tribes ready to attack Kandahar.

The report about Ayúb-Khán's march from Herát on Kandahar proved to be unfounded, for the movement of a detachment from Herát to the Urdu Bágh had no serious object. It appears to us that the rumour of movements on the capital of Southern Afghánistán had no foundation, because, judging by all that was going on at the time in Afghánistán, Ayúb-Khán must necessarily have been thoroughly taken up in securing his own rule, and hence could have had no idea of warlike enterprises for which he had not yet succeeded in making the required preparations.

We should bear in mind that at this time there was no Amir in Afghánistán, and both Kábul and Kandahar were in the occupation of the English, and that the Sháh of Persia was preparing to go on a pilgrimage to Mashad, and had ordered the assembly of a force numbering 10,000 men. All these circumstances, of the first importance, naturally induced Ayúb-Khán to take that course of action which

* To the *Times*.—*Author*.

† A Reuter's telegram from Bombay, dated 2nd (14th) December 1879.—*Author*.

inclined to the better consolidation of his rule at Herát. Of risky outside enterprises he could have no thought, and although the English regarded Ayúb-Khán as a man of flighty character, he had not up to date proved to be so and he had not quitted Herát. Moreover, his army was not yet organised sufficiently to enable him to think of any sort of task. His men had not received their pay with regularity, and possessed no military discipline.

Considering, then, all that has been communicated regarding the condition of the Afghán army at Herát, it will not seem strange to hear that a strife was going on between the various political parties. Thus a telegram to the *Times*, sent from Kandahar on the 5th (17th) December, reported that a fight had taken place near Herát between the Herát and Kábul troops and that the final issue of the engagement had not been decided, though it was stated that the Kábul troops had taken Ayúb-Khán prisoner, had proclaimed Abdulla-Khán Governor, and had occupied the citadel of Herát.* As a supplement to this news the *Journal de St. Petersburg* announced that information had been received from Teherán by a telegram dated 6th (18th) December which gave Mashad news to the effect that an expedition, undertaken by Ayúb-Khán from Herát, had met with no success; that the Herát troops which had formed part of the Kábul garrison had arrested him and brought him back to Herát, and that the rebels were in possession of that city. On the 16th (28th) December it was telegraphed from Calcutta to London that Ayúb-Khán was not in arrest, though still in the hands of the Kábul troops and deprived of his arms. It was added that he had sent his father-in-law to Kandahar to open negotiations with the British authorities.

All this information communicating the position of affairs in the Herát province did not give a true representation of what in reality was taking place there.

In the beginning of 1880 fairly circumstantial information was received at Kandahar of what had taken place at Herát during the previous month. The Kandahar correspondent† of the *Times* thus wrote:—

"Herát affairs appear to be in greater confusion than I represented in my last telegram. Faizulla-Khán, leader of the Herát troops, after his defeat, fled to Ghurián, a small fort near the Persian frontier. He is there collecting fresh forces in order to attack the Kábulis, who are now almost besieging Herát. The populace, it is said, is greatly excited and falls on the Kábulis whenever they appear in small parties. Thus 50 of their number who had gone to the city suburbs for forage were attacked and killed to the last man. Ayúb-Khán is behaving with the usual

* In another telegram it was affirmed that the Kábulis had plundered the city during three days.—*Author.*

† *Vide* telegram in the *Times* dated 22nd December (3rd January).—*Author.*

treachery characteristic of his race. At first he incited the Herátis to attack the Kábulis in the hope of getting quit of the latter: he then went over to the side of the Kábulis as soon as he perceived that the Herátis could not cope with them. Ayúb-Khán is in fact not in arrest at Herát, but Abdulla-Khán, leader of the Kábul troops, acts towards him as a puppet. Sirdár Mir-Afzul, on learning that Ayúb-Khán had abandoned his intention of marching on Kandahar, left the province with his family and went to Lásh-Juvain, purposing to hide himself in Persia.* The fort of Farrah is at present unoccupied.†

It was at the same time stated that Ayúb-Khán intended to march on Ghazni in order to assist Muhammad-Ján. Meanwhile he sent from Herát, at the head of a small escort, a Duráni official as Governor of Farrah. This man had been in the suite of the late Shir-Ali-Khán. We have mentioned above‡ the deeds in the direction of Farrah of Ibrahim-Khán, the famous robber of Chaknazár. This man had occupied the town of Farrah and imposed a contribution on its inhabitants, and therefore an attempt was made, though not a successful one, to despatch two regiments to the place from Herát. On the 18th (30th) January news came from Calcutta to say that Ayúb-Khán had not succeeded in persuading the Kábulis to go with him to Farrah, and that the Kábul troops had threatened to return to their homes if pay was not issued to them. Faizulla-Khán, the leader of the Herát troops, who had attempted to hide himself at Ghurián, was seized and executed by order of Ayúb-Khán.

In the information above recorded there are very frequent contradictions, still in it are noted those main facts that were brought to the notice of the English Commanders and which give a colour to the state of affairs in the province of Herát during October, November, December 1879, and January 1880.

The Russian failures in the Akhál-Tekke country in 1879 to some extent sobered the English. They became convinced that the safety of Herát had been secured from the west, at least for a year. They then went to the other extreme and began to exercise with regard to Ayúb-Khán a thoughtless disregard, never dreaming that this young Afghán was strong enough to operate against them whenever and however he might choose. Meanwhile Ayúb-Khán's name, which was spoken of in connection with the planning of the Kábul catastrophe, is pronounced with respect in the Muhammadan world.

The English Generals had come to the conclusion that Ayúb-Khán

* In a telegram dated 29th December (10th January) we read that Mir-Afzul had invited Ayúb-Khán to send some one to occupy Farrah, but nobody was sent. He therefore made over the fort to a local elder, who divided the stores in the arsenal and the powder magazine amongst his followers and broke up the gun-carriage.—*Author.*

† The same source of information tells us that in Seistán there is a terrible famine, and that the inhabitants are selling their children in order to get food.—*Author*

enjoyed no kind of authority, and that the Herát province presented a picture of constant civil war and complete disorder, and that therefore, as they supposed, there was no sort of ground for dreading anything in that direction. Still they considered it expedient to strengthen and to reinforce the Kandahar post in order that they might at any time move out brigade to the north or to the west, if such should be necessary. The question of leaving Kandahar with too small a garrison never disquieted them.

The conclusion they had come to regarding the weakness of Herát pacified the minds of the English to so considerable a degree as to allow them to hope that it would be possible to decide the fate of Afghánistán without considering what Ayúb-Khán might do. With regard to this question, concerning which we have had occasion to speak in detail, the English thought to draw off the attention of the ruler of Herát by putting forward negotiations relating to the *conditional surrender* of both the city and province of Herát to the *Sháh of Persia*. In a word, the English regarded Ayúb-Khán as a weak ruler who, when he found himself between two fires would, *nolens volens*, remain quietly at Herát.

Whether this was so or not, or what the young ruler of Herát intended to do, no one knew for certain. A private telegram* from Vienna, dated 23rd January 1880, gives us an indication that the idea which the English had formed regarding Ayúb-Khán did not altogether correspond with the truth. This telegram stated that the *Friedenblatt* had heard from a trustworthy source in Constantinople of a popular assembly (*jirgah*) having been convened, at which it had been decided to oppose by force or arms the approach of either Persians or English, and to use every endeavour to hold out until the result of the Russian Expedition was known.† As regards the further course of action, the meeting decided that "in the event of Ayúb-Khán's success he should be declared the independent ruler of Herát."

Almost at the same time the *Standard* published, though in a somewhat different form, similar news. In this information it was stated that the Afghán leaders had assembled, with Ayúb-Khán as president, and had decided to call on the people to arm and to defend themselves to the last drop of blood, and then to solicit a Russian protectorate.‡

Subsequently a force of Herát troops, provided with artillery, was sent to attack Ibrahim-Khán, who was administering the province of Farrah.

We may observe here that to the news of the bloody dissensions in the Herát garrison was attached the following interesting communication: "The rumour designedly spread abroad in advance of the troops by

* From the special correspondent of the *Gólos*.—*Author*.

† This refers to the Akhál-Tekke Expedition.—*Author*.

‡ At this meeting it was decided that Ayúb-Khán should administer Herát until the country passed under the protectorate of Russia.—*Author*.

their leader that the English had decided to hang all soldiers of the Afghán regular army, had in all probability not a little to say to extending the insurrection of the Kábul tribes, which furnished five-sixths of the entire army." Although this observation has no sort of connection with the position of affairs in the province of Herát, still it has a wide importance, because, as we have seen above, the rumour had a basis, for in his proclamations General Roberts directly alludes to the execution of soldiers formerly in Yakúb-Khán's army. Furthermore, the punishment was actually meted out to many soldiers who with arms in their hands had defended their native land from the unbidden European. It was very natural that the shooting and hanging of Afghán soldiers and the burning of their bodies should have become known at Herát, and therefore the Afghán troops who were there decided to sell their lives dearly and not allow Ayúb-Khán to enter into any kind of friendly agreement with the English. It was on this hatred, then, of the troops towards the English that Ayúb-Khán rested his strength, and by which he got ready for a serious enterprise. We thus see that the severities enlarged by General Roberts into a military terrorism had not cowed the Afgháns, but had exasperated them and had constituted a distinct obstacle to the establishment of any sort of peaceful arrangement with this manly people and its leaders.

Further information relating to the state of affairs in the Herát province for February and March 1880 is comprised in the following: A telegram from Kandahar, dated 9th (21st) February tells us that "Yusuf-Khán, representative of Ayúb-Khán at Farrah, has endeavoured, though unsuccessfully, to excite the population of Zamindawár against Sirdár Shir-Ali (of Kandahar) and the English; that Ayúb-Khán has sent a mission to Kandahar with the object of securing for himself the title of "ruler of Herát" and of declaring his most loyal feelings towards the Kandahar Administration. All communication between Farrah and Herát has ceased." In this telegram there is an obvious contradiction, for at its end mention is made of the stoppage of communication between Farrah and Herát, and in its opening words it is stated that the Governor of Farrah, appointed by Ayúb-Khán, was endeavouring to cause an insurrection in the province adjoining that of Kandahar. We have, however, full grounds for supposing that at the close of February the power of Ayúb-Khán at Farrah was thoroughly established, for it soon became known that Ibrahim had entered into an arrangement to this end with Yusuf-Khán, the Governor of Farrah. Hence Seistán had assumed an attitude that was hostile to the English.

Contemporaneous with the consolidation of his strength, Ayúb-Khán was seeking the good-will of the English authorities, but this we think only indicates the usual cunning of an Asiatic ruler who desired to calm the apprehensions of his opponent.

In a telegram from Calcutta, dated (17th) 29th February, it was mentioned that news from Kandahar spoke of a fresh fight at Herát between the Kábul and Herát troops. This fight had taken place, as indicated in a Kandahar telegram of the 23rd February (6th March) at a general parade of the troops which was to have been held by Ayúb-Khán. The parade in fact never came off, for the Kábul and Herát faction fell on each other and the Kábulis suffered severely.

In a telegram from Kandahar, dated 2nd (14th) March, it was reported that Ayúb-Khán had exacted from the people of Herát all that they possessed and hence they would welcome with joy any change in the administration.

To Herát, so said the telegram, had come two envoys of the Persian Government whom Ayúb-Khán received with cordiality. It was further stated that the carrying of news by the caravans trading between Herát and Kandahar had been strictly forbidden, and that all the troops at Herát had expressed their intention of going to Afghán-Turkistán, where, as we know, Sirdár Abdul-Rahmán-Khán was at this time developing his activity.

On the 15th (27th) March news reached Kandahar that Yusuf-Khán's rule at Farrah was getting weaker day by day, and that though he had sent inflammatory letters to Zamindawár endeavouring to rouse the people against the English, both the *troops* and the officials of Ayúb-Khán, who had not received their pay since the Ramzán, *were getting fewer and fewer with each day*.

Disregarding the confusion and contradiction of this truly untrustworthy information as to the state of the province of Herát, the English Commanders apparently made up their minds that Ayúb-Khán's authority over the people and the troops of the Herát province was characterised by absolute weakness.

The Kábul troops at Herát urge Ayúb-Khán to march against Kandahar.

During the month of April news was received from Herát that the Kábul troops there had again urged Ayúb-Khán to go to Kandahar, and that he had promised them to enter upon a campaign on the 29th April (11th May). The same news told us that the ruler of Herát had not only collected all the imposts on the ripening crops, but had begun to ask for those due from the next harvest, and that the frontier tribes had refused to pay him anything. In a telegram from the Kábul correspondent of the *Daily News* of the 5th (17th) May, it was represented that deserters from Herát had reported that city to be in a state of anarchy, and that Ayúb-Khán was really a prisoner, that the troops oppressed the people, and that the Sar-i-Pul regiments, not having received their pay for several months, had revolted.

On the other hand, news came from Simla* that Ayúb-Khán had on the 8th (20th) May pitched his camp at Rozábád, near Herát, and that he had previously sent 1,000 horsemen in the direction of the Kandahar frontier.

Ayúb-Khán desires to quiet the English mind regarding events at Herát.

The news from Herát became more and more conflicting. It was evident that Ayúb-Khán was designedly lulling the attention of the English and was employing various means to effect this. On the 24th May (5th June) Colonel St. John, Political Agent in Southern Afghánistán, received a letter from Ibrahim-Khán, the independent ruler of Chaknazár, in which he declared his allegiance to the British Government and offered to send his own son into Kandahar. "Up to this time," runs the telegram from Kandahar, "Ibrahim-Khán was considered to be our sworn enemy." This letter very naturally confirmed the conviction of the English as to Ayúb-Khán's *want of power*, for it seemed to show that the frontier leaders of the Herát province were on the side of English policy. We imagine, however, that this incident was one of those instances of cunning so characteristic of Asiatics, and we are inclined to think that the English understood its true import, for on the 10th (22nd) May it was known at Kandahar that Ayúb-Khán had with a political object married the daughter of Ibrahim-Khán of Chaknazár.

Ibrahim-Khán of Chaknazár declares himself to be a friend of the English.

Ayúb-Khán marries a daughter of Ibrahim-Khán of Chaknazár.

On the 17th (29th) May it was known also at the same place that Ayúb-Khán was in camp with an army outside Herát, and that he had decided to make an attempt to possess himself of Kandahar by force of arms. "The general opinion is," says a Kandahar correspondent, "that Ayúb-Khán is acting at the instigation of families in close connection with the late Amir Yakúb-Khán, and that they have complete power over five Kábul battalions. These battalions have long been demanding that they should either be led against Kandahar or that they should be paid up and allowed to go to their homes. The news of Abdul-Rahmán-Khán's successes in Afghán-Turkistán and of our probable evacuation of the country in the event of our coming to terms with him has doubtless been conveyed to Ayúb-Khán from Kábul. All this has probably suggested to the ruler of Herát, or to his people in whose hands he is, to take some bold step, such as the occupation of the capital of Southern Afghánistán, before Abdul-Rahmán's coming.

Ayúb-Khán's intentions with regard to Kandahar.

Effect of Abdul-Rahmán's successes in Afghán-Turkistán on Ayúb-Khán's plans.

The most favourable season for the march of troops between Herát and Kandahar.

The most favourable time for the march of troops not encumbered with a baggage train will soon set in.

* A Reuter's telegram to London dated 19th (31st) May.—*Author.*

The harvest which, in the neighbourhood of the Helmand, has been above the average, has been gathered in, and Ayúb-Khán's army could make use of the grain which the people could not carry off the ground and that which is in store. The straw would furnish abundant forage. Ayúb-Khán would then be able to feed his force without any difficulty. But whether he can keep his troops together until the time arrives for leaving Herát, is very doubtful. The hatred between the Kábul and Herát soldiery, instead of growing less, is increasing, and although Ayúb-Khán has patched up a truce for the time, it is well known there exist differences between the leaders of his force. Generally speaking, therefore, *it is very likely that the Herát army will melt away before the frontier is reached.* That frontier is on the River Kush, 150 miles from Kandahar and 250 from Herát. If, on the other hand, the campaign, contrary to expectation, comes off, there may be serious though not alarming consequences. That we should not have taken possession of Herát, which was in our power 15 months ago, is not understood by the Afghans, and they therefore hold it as undoubted that some secret reasons compelled us to act as we have done. For the past six months the adherents of the former dynasty have been with their eyes fixed on Kábul, but here the game is played out and their sole hope is centred in Herát where they imagine we are afraid to interfere. Although the mass of the people is far from desiring the restoration of the old *régime*, still there are many who would welcome a change. Amongst these must be reckoned many fanatics who would joyfully seize a favourable opportunity for fighting against the "unbelievers," and there are also many idle free-booters who are always ready for a row. All these classes of persons could be easily roused were Ayúb-Khán to appear with an army on the scene. Still Ayúb-Khán has been led into error in his reckoning of our strength, and the movement of a single brigade towards Girishk would probably suffice to stop his march and to quiet the excitement that would attend his expected arrival."

Herát open to the English at the beginning of 1879.

Ayúb-Khán proves *not* to be in error as to the strength of the English brigade in the direction of the Helmand.

In a Simla telegram dated 6th (18th) June, it was stated that, according to Herát news, Ayúb-Khán's attempt to get recruits from amongst the local population had not proved successful, and in an official telegram from the Viceroy, dated 11th (23rd) June, it was reported that Kandahar despatches from the Wali, who was at Girishk, gave assurances of support from the chiefs of the several tribes scattered about the country towards Herát. Finally, a telegram from the Kábul correspondent of the *Times*, communicated information from Herát to the effect that it had there been decided not to undertake any hostile action against the English with regular troops, but to send a thousand horsemen

to raise the Duránis in Washir and Zamindawár. Should this attempt prove successful, Ayúb-Khán would then decide upon an advance and to reinforce those in arms with regular troops.

The ignorance of the English Commanders regarding Ayúb-Khán's movements towards Kandahar.

The English Commanders were in deep error as to the possibilities of Ayúb-Khán's march to Kandahar. *The British authorities had foolishly ignored their Herát enemies.*

20.—HERÁT UNIVERSALLY ADMITTED TO BE A POINT OF THE GREATEST STRATEGICAL IMPORTANCE.

This is what Sir John Kaye says of Herát:* "The strategical and tactical position of Herát is such as to aptly call forth in the mind of every military thinker the most serious reflections. It has, with no impropriety of designation, been described as the 'Gate of India.' Within the limits of the town of Herát all the great roads leading on India converge. * * It is only by the Herát route that a really formidable and well-equipped army could make its way upon the Indian frontier from the regions on the north-west. * * All the materials necessary for the organisation of a great army and the formation of its depôts are to be found in the neighbourhood of Herát. The extraordinary fertility of the plain has fairly entitled it to be popularly called the 'Granary of Central Asia.' * * Upon the possession of Herát would truly depend, in no small measure, the success of operations undertaken for the invasion or the defence of India."

Conolly,† another authority, thus writes of the same place: "Nothing can exceed the abundance and excellence of the products of the Herát Valley; an army could remain in it for years together and without experiencing an insufficiency of things needful to it, for everything necessary to its existence lies to hand."

William MacNaghten, the Envoy Extraordinary to Kábul (in 1840), in one of his secret despatches to Lord Auckland, a former Viceroy of India, made use of the following expression: "Herát may be regarded as the base of operations undertaken with the object of endangering the safety of our dominion and interests in the East."

These and other similar opinions, expressed by English soldiers and politicians towards the close of the 30th and the beginning of the 40th year of the present century, have formed the basis for a whole series of treatises and writings, more or less important, in support of the value of the strategical position of Herát as a point which might serve as a base for military expeditions directed against India. This question

* Kaye's *History of the War in Afghánistán*, pp. 212-213.—*Author.*
† Captain Conolly's *Overland Journey to India.*—*Author.*

has been examined by Englishmen with the thoroughness characteristic of them, and their views on the importance of Herát may be accepted as conclusive.

Herát the point of the greatest importance in Asia.

Certainly, in the whole of Central, and even, it may be said, in Southern Asia, there is no point of greater importance in a military sense. Asia-Minor, the Caucasus, Persia, Turkistán, Afghánistán, Biluchistán, and India herself, are all connected by the town of Herát. The Herát province is celebrated for its wealth of grain produce, the yield of which is sufficient to feed an army of 100,000 men with its followers, &c. The transport requirements of such an army—and these would be immense—could be met by local resources. Through Herát lies the only road by which a large army could move with ease. From this town up to the Lower Indus there are no insurmountable natural obstacles. Having reached Kandahar, an army directed towards India could move onwards by several routes, and force the Gomal, Dera-Gházi-Khán, and Bolán Passes, or even those further to the north which lead through the Valleys of Khost, Kuram, and Kábul. We may observe that the southern Passes are incomparably more practicable than are those to the north for an army whose objective is the banks of the Indus.

Herát a great centre.

Wealth of the Herát province.

No difficulties between Herát and the Indus Valley.

The popular instinct of the natives of India has long ago recognised the importance of Herát, so that a body of European troops quartered in that town, with its front facing the south-east, would, without doubt, attract the attention of the entire population of British India. In this fact lies the moral significance of a military occupation of Herát. Those Englishmen, who know India well, do not vainly assert that with the occupation of this town by a strong force of the enemy, the Anglo-Indian Army, without even entering the field as an opponent, might consider itself half defeated.

Native opinion has always recognised the extreme importance of Herát.

Moral significance attaching to the possession of Herát.

Although from a purely military point of view one cannot but regard such a conviction as to some extent an exaggeration, Englishmen, who view military operations in Southern Asia as possible in the future, justly connect these with the *political* phase of the question. This is comprehensible, for the Indian peninsula is peopled by races for the most part hostile to English rule.

However this may be, the English regard Herát as a point of peculiar importance, both in a military and a political sense, and they even apply to it the title of "the key to the possession of India."

In view of such considerations, which are of a popular character, the

English attach special importance to the question as to who shall become the ultimate possessor of the town and province of Herát. The majority of those who have served and who are now serving in India (and behind them is a whole party in England) consider the occupation of both by English troops as the best solution of the difficulty. More cautious politicians hold that it would be sufficient to occupy Herát with a mixed Persian and English force.

Mixed Persian and English force for the occupation of Herát.

A very few are inclined to allow Persia to become sole occupier of Herát; but all to a man foresee the great danger to English power in India if Herát should fall into the hands of any other European Army.

Persia as the sole occupier of Herát.

Danger to India were Herát to become the possession of any European Power besides England herself.

We do not consider it necessary to enter into a minute valuation of these considerations, but we may remark that the misgivings of the English, at least with regard to the present time,* seem to us exaggerated and not altogether real. In order to regard them as just and real we must of necessity assume that the *English power in India is not merely insecure, but that it is tottering.* If this be correct, and if such is the conviction of those English who know India well, their dread as regards Herát is very comprehensible.

21.—The Herát question, and the Policy of England, Persia, and Russia respectively, with regard to its settlement.

As soon as the second phase of the Anglo-Afghán campaign opened, the English Head-Quarter Staff did not confine its attention to what General Stewart was to undertake; but, after the defeat of the Afghán army at Chár-Asiáb and the occupation of Kábul, repeated efforts were made to finish with the Afghán question once for all. Under the influence of a rapid and easy success, the plans undertaken to this end received wide development. It was resolved to prepare from Kandahar a base for decisive operations against Herát. It was imagined that this undertaking was possible. It was conceived that General Roberts should operate from Ghazni and even undertake the conquest of Afghán-Turkistán whilst Stewart's strong division from Bengal should, on being reinforced by a division of the Bombay army, co operate with a Persian force, and having occupied Herát should bring that province under English influence.

Scheme for an English advance against Herát in contemplation after the renewal of hostilities consequent on the Kábul massacre.

Co-operation with a Persian force intended.

* The writer is probably speaking of the year 1879, but events have matured since then.—*Translator.*

Everything was directed towards the fulfilment of this object. The plan acquired a real importance. The campaign was to terminate with the attainment of a secure safeguard for India from attack from without. No one, after Roberts' brilliant successes before Kábul, presumed to think that on this occasion the dispositions of the Head-Quarter Staff of the Indian Army should be set aside.

Preparations for the advance on Herát.

Towards the close of December 1879 a telegram was sent from Kandahar to the *Civil and Military Gazette*, in which we meet with the following passage: "There is every reason to suppose that a portion of the military force here will, in a short time, be moved to Girishk. Provisions are now being collected and bridges on the road are under repair. A vast quantity of artillery *matériel* has been ordered up from Quetta." For the movement on Girishk the following details were told off: the 60th Foot, 25th Punjab Native Infantry, 15th Sikhs, 1st Panjáb Cavalry, 19th Bengal Lancers, two companies of Sappers, a Mountain Battery, and an Engineer Field Park. The above constituted the whole fighting strength at General Stewart's disposal. However, the movement on Girishk was not carried out, but a concentration of fresh forces at Kandahar was awaited.

The *Globe*,* towards the close of December 1879, announced that at a Cabinet Council of the English ministry, it had been deemed expedient, *in view of the impending military operations in Central Asia*, to at once occupy Herát. Lord Lytton, the Viceroy of India, in one of his speeches, openly said that it was in contemplation to despatch an expedition during the spring season against Herát.

We will not allow ourselves to here enter into a further examination of this interesting and extremely important question, but will conclude with the remark that during the winter of 1879, enough about Herát and its future fate appeared in the Press, and at the beginning of 1880 the incontrovertible expediency and possibility of obtaining possession of the "gate of India" had become perfectly clear to the English.

The proposed advance against Herát has to be abandoned in consequence of the events at Kábul leading to the investment of Sherpur.

But the English were now wrong in their calculations. Although they had to put up with their December defeats at the hands of an inconsiderable portion of the Afghán population (not $\frac{1}{20}$th of the whole), they had still to learn that these Afghán successes not only paralysed the first triumphs of two strong divisions, but that they were to force them to adopt a defensive attitude, and that success generally had slipped from their hands. The ambitious plans had consequently to be narrowed, for the military forces of British India were insufficient to carry out in one cam-

* The paper which, with the kind help of Mr. Marvin, published, during the period of the Berlin Congress, an important secret document.—*Author.*

paign the difficult problem of the subjugation of the whole of Afghánistán.

We have seen that the Afgháns had, towards the close of November and the beginning of December 1879, in several engagements defeated General Roberts's forces, and had compelled him to shut himself up in Sherpur. We have termed these engagements brilliant victories for the Afgháns: and certainly they had no mere local significance, for they influenced in the most fatal manner the entire progress of the campaign in Afghánistán—*they compelled the English to abandon the thought of occupying Herát.*

The question again brought forward.

When, however, Muhammad-Ján was driven from Kábul, and Sherpur was relieved from a state of siege, the English imagined that the difficulties they had met with on the Kábul plain had come to an end, and that the time had arrived for thinking seriously of the pacification of Western Afghánistán. The London correspondent of the Vienna *Neue Freie Presse*, who apparently received his information from a trustworthy source, telegraphed from London that the news of the recent English victory had called forth in Government circles great joy. "It is believed that immediately Kábul has quieted down, *an English Army will advance to Herát.*"

The idea of making Herát over to Persia revived.

Towards the end of November 1879, there appeared in the English Press circumstantial details regarding the surrender of the province of Herát to Persia, under certain conditions. The Kábul correspondent of the *Times*, in a telegram dated 26th November (8th December) 1879, told us that the idea of dividing Afghánistán had not found advocates amongst persons occupying a prominent position, so that the *old* notion of allowing Persia to take Herát had been revived, provided, that is, that her doing so was guaranteed by certain conditions rendering it impossible for *foreign influence* to assert itself therein.

And certainly the Envoy Extraordinary of Great Britain accredited to the Court of Teherán received orders from London to do all he could to draw Persia to the side of English interest and to detach her from Russia. To this end he opened negotiations with the Sháh's Government regarding the cession of Herát to Persia. England felt herself to be weak, so that in order to put herself right in the Afghán question she considered it advantageous to strengthen herself by an alliance with Persia.

The Sháh, who had always nourished a passionate desire to get possession of Herát, joyfully listened to the proposals of Mr. Thomson on the subject, but we do not know how far he was pleased with the conditions which the English attached to the scheme when presenting it to his notice. Desirous of Persian co-operation, the English essayed to enter into

agreement with the Sháh, and it projected an occupation of Herát by mixed English and Persian forces.

The idea of a campaign against Herát occurred to the English immediately after the defeat of the Afgháns at Chár-Asiáb and the occupation of Kábul by the force under General Roberts. The Staff of the Indian Army had grounds for the belief that the complete success obtained by the Kuram column at the Afghán capital would have a quieting effect on the Afgháns, and would induce them to agree to the demands made by the English: but, as we have seen, this reckoning was not verified.

When in the beginning of December 1879 Muhammad-Ján's regiments defeated General Roberts before Kábul, and compelled him to shut himself up in Sherpur, General Stewart received orders to send special envoys to Ayúb-Khán with this message: "if you wish to remain at Herát, you must hold it *in the interests of the English.*" Now the ruler of Herát knew very well what was really going on at Kábul, and he therefore understood that the threat could have no sort of meaning in the near future. He consequently not only displayed a disinclination to follow the advice given, but he laboured with all his might to pacify his province and to prepare for a forward movement against the English. It is remarkable that the worse affairs went for the English before Kábul the more boldly they declared their intention of occupying Herát. The English Official Agency, *the Central News*, made the following announcement at the beginning of December 1879: "In Indian ministerial circles an expedition to Herát is considered likely, because if the English do not go there, the Russians will. From all parts of India troops are moving forward with the greatest rapidity."

Anglo-Indian force to march from Kandahar on Herát.

To think of an independent march to Herát from Kandahar would be altogether impossible, because such an Anglo-Indian Force would be of insufficient strength and without the necessary transport. Moreover, a campaign against Herát would involve a long line of operations in a country completely hostile to the English. It would therefore prove a risky and very costly military enterprise. In view of this, English strategists have thought of using Persian territory for the purpose of attacking Herát from the west. They have proposed that Persian troops should be sent to Seistán and to Herát,* and behind them should be despatched

Proposal to attack Herát from the Persian side.

* On the 2nd (14th) February 1880 news was received in London that the Persian Sháh had set out for Mashad on the 24th March (5th April), and that a body of 12,000 troops had been there assembled. On the 15th (27th) February news, too, reached London that the Sháh of Persia had nominated Prince Ali-Gul, one of the members of the dynasty which ruled Herát in the XIVth century, Commander of the Khurássán Army Corps. To this prince had been entrusted about 15,000 men, his orders being to occupy Herát.—*Author.*

a small column of English troops equipped at Karachi and conveyed thence in vessels to the Bushire Port of the Persian Gulf.*

For a movement on Herát, without the co-operation of Persian troops, it was supposed that to start with a force of 10,000 infantry, 3,000 cavalry, 800 gunners, or a total of 13,800 men, would have been sufficient. But of this number 7,000 would of necessity have had to be detached for the occupation of points on the line of operations and the province of Farrah. Thus all the force that would have been available at Herát would have slightly exceeded 6,000 men. Now, for a body of troops of this strength, including hospital establishment, &c., nearly 60,000 camels would have been required for the transport of two months' supplies. Let us suppose that this number could have been collected, and that the force had marched. The population *en-route* to Herát would be in an excited state, and therefore opposition might be expected during the advance. But let us suppose that the population between Kandahar and Sabzawár remained quiet, still, without doubt, resistance would be shown by the inhabitants of Herát and its vicinity by the Afghán troops therein stationed. We will even suppose that the Herát troops had been defeated, that the opposition of the populace had been overcome, and that an Anglo-Indian force had occupied Herát. What would then be the situation?

The force would have reached Herát after a march of not less than 50 or 60 days without provisions, without forage, jaded, and in all probability with a large number of sick, and generally very enfeebled. At first, as was the case at Kábul, the people would probably preserve comparative quiet, and of this the English would take advantage by collecting supplies. Their troops would occupy Herát and the adjacent suburbs. The English commanders would have issued several threatening proclamations, and then the people, having recovered from their first terror, and having become conscious of the low numbers and the weakness of the English detachment, would combine and compel the English to adopt defensive measures.

The affair would be altogether different if the English could march on Herát with 20,000 men, after leaving at Kandahar and on the line of communications between that city and the Indus not less than 15,000 men. But, *firstly*, the Anglo-Indian Army is certainly not in a condition to detach 35,000 men for a campaign against Herát; and

* The Vienna *Freindenblatt* was one of the first papers which received the news that the Indian Government had concentrated troops at Karáchi which were under orders to go by sea to Bushire and thence to march through Persian territory to Herát. According to a telegram from Reuter's Agency at Teherán, dated 19th February (2nd March) the Persian Government had withdrawn from the project to send an expedition to Seistán and Herát, dreading that the same might lead to political difficulties. To this news the *Press* added that England had declined to satisfy Persia's demand regarding a subsidy. * * * The English held the curious notion of the possibility of concluding a foreign loan for Persia, and that the guarantee of this loan was to be English credit based upon the custom dues obtained at Bushire and Herát.—*Author.*

secondly, even if a southern column could be reinforced by troops expressly brought out from England, a campaign against Herát would be beset with countless difficulties, because the movement of 20,000 men in this direction without the possession of the proper amount of carriage would be a problem well nigh impossible to solve.

In view, then, of these considerations, the English thought of undertaking a campaign against Herát in combination with Persian troops. But just as the Sháh was compelled to discountenance the interference of Great Britain in the affairs of Persia, so, too, he wished to receive the province of Herát without the right of England to interfere. Thus all the disposition of the Head-Quarter Staff of the Indian Army regarding a campaign against Herát remained absolutely unfulfilled.

The idea of directing the southern column to march on Herát had been abandoned.

The English had come to be disabused of their hopes of getting into their own hands the "Key of India." Without indulging in a minute examination of the causes which induced them to considerably narrow their military strategical plans and to altogether abandon their projected campaign against Herát, we may make the following observations:—

(1) The events of December 1879 before Kábul had once more convinced the English of the difficulty of obtaining a solid military success over armed bands of the Afghán populace. The negotiations begun by General Roberts towards the close of December with the leaders of the Ghazni party—negotiations which were protracted through January, February, and March—finally led the English to the conclusion that it was absolutely necessary to secure results by force of arms. But since the Kábul detachment, although of considerable strength, could not carry out an independent movement on Ghazni, it was decided to despatch thither forces from Kandahar and Kábul simultaneously.

(2) The *pour-parlers* between Great Britain and Persia regarding the establishment of the reciprocal strengthening of the Herát province and the simultaneous movement on that city of English and Persian troops, having met with serious exterior diplomatic obstacles, did not lead to the result which the English desired.

(3) The appearance in Northern Afghánistán of Abdul-Rahmán-Khán at a time when, if he had been able to come to terms with Ayúb-Khán and the Ghazni leaders, *viz.*, Muhammad-Ján and Mushk-i-Alam, he could have created against the English a powerful Afghán coalition. In order that the formation of such a dangerous coalition might be averted, it was necessary to put forth all the strength that the English could command, so as to weaken as far as possible, or even to overthrow, the pact formed by the Ghazni leaders.

(4) Finally, no hopes existed that the mere march of an Anglo-Indian detachment into the distant province of Herát could, under the circumstances in which the southern column found itself, lead to the real pacification of Western Afghánistán.

From Kandahar to Herát by the shortest and best route the distance is, according to Bradshaw, 344⅔ miles. The intermediate stages between Kandahar and Herát by the route in question are as follows: Girishk 66⅔rd miles, Washir 62⅔ miles, Sehwán 76⅔ miles,* Sabzawár 55⅓ miles, and Herát 73⅓ miles.

Major David, in his brochure "Is a Russian invasion of India feasible?" reckons the distance at 28 days' march.

English movement on Herát as viewed by Russia.

If it be true that in the spring a considerable body of troops are to be sent from Kandahar to Herát, then the English will place themselves in a very serious and even critical position, both in a military and in a political respect.

The English Government is very well aware that the Herát question is to be decided by force of arms alone, and that no sort of diplomatic compromises could solve it on behalf of the interests of one Power. But on the other hand it quite understands that a campaign against Herát is a problem diametrically opposed to the general state of affairs in the Afghán theatre of military operations, and to the condition of the armed forces of British India.

Russia to be consulted in the question of the disposal of Herát.

We have said above that the Conservative Ministry of England, with the intention of settling the Afghán question with all its ramifications in a way that might be favourable to English interests, had found it convenient to offer Herát to Persia. But this question could not be settled in the way at which Great Britain was aiming, because Russia had placed upon such a course her firm *veto*.†

* By the road which is more frequented by caravans the distance is held to be 380 miles.—*Author.*

† Special correspondent in London of the *Gólos.*—*Author.*

As a contribution to the illustration of the Herát question, we deem it not superfluous to here insert the following telegram from Constantinople to the *Daily Telegraph*:—The latest information received from Teherán, bearing date the 7th (19th) April, tells us that although for the present the question of the occupation of Herát by Persian troops has been deferred, yet the Sháh is indisposed to consider the *pour-parlers* with England on the subject at an end. At least, preliminary measures have been adopted which should be the beginning of an occupation of the kind. Thus, a force of 2,300 Infantry and Cavalry have marched on Mashad, and other troops are preparing to follow under the pretence of completing the garrison of that town. Prince Sultán-Murád is at Teherán, and he was expressly summoned from Kernianbri to take the command of an expeditionary force destined for Herát. Although Russia has up till now maintained a perfectly passive attitude as regards the negotiations which have been going on between Persia and England, still the Sháh knows very well that Russia's answer to the occupation of Herát by Persian troops would be the conversion of the Caspian sea into a Russia lake.—*Author.*

Russia's conditions regarding an English occupation of Herát.

Russia can only allow England to occupy Herát when the English Government finally casts off a policy of rivalry with Russia in Southern Asia, and makes corresponding concessions of value in the Eastern Question—not in words, of course, but in deeds. To trust to words would never do for us, for we have offered up too many bloody sacrifices in the settlement of a question that periodically agitates Europe, of which the essence is a solid safeguard for the development of our rich Black Sea littoral, and for the securing to the Slávs the possibility of self-government.

Russia will not consent to the surrender of Herát to Persia.

We have spoken above of the plan for the re-arrangement of Afgháni stán, as worked out by the Anglo-Indian Government, and we know, too, of the proposal to make over the province of Herát to the Sháh of Persia, certain conditions being observed with respect to the administration of that province. But the question of the surrender of the Herát province to Persia touches the most vital interests of Russia, England, Afgháni stán, and of Persia herself, and we therefore consider it appropriate to here communicate some of the details put forward in the Press of Europe.

Interference of the German Press in the Central Asian Question.

As in so many other instances relating to the Central Asian question, the German Press, in a matter which evidently does not concern it, has hastened to take a part. The Berlin correspondent of the *Daily News* on the 11th (23rd) November 1879 telegraphed the following to London: "I have received from St. Petersburg a private letter, the writer of which is in a position to possess accurate information. He says—the official circles of St. Petersburg have received news of the intention of the English Government to occupy Herát, in alliance with Persia, during the approaching spring. I can only say that the news is believed, and that it at once *called forth a hostile feeling*. Until the arrival of the Emperor no steps will be taken in the matter, but it is expected that preparations will be made to *repel by force* any such intention of limiting the sphere of Russian politics in Central Asia, for it would deal a very serious blow to the very widely diffused opinion, *viz.*, that Persia will eventually fall to the lot of Russia. It is difficult, however, to conjecture how and by what means Russia could actually oppose the putting forward of such a plan even if it exists. To talk of despatching an army of 100,000 men from the Caucasus would be a simple threat, if we bear in mind the difficulties and reverses encountered during an expedition* one-fifth of the strength of the one above mentioned. Moreover, the more practicable road from the north, from Sámarkand and Chaharjui, lies so far from the base of

* Allusion is here made to the Akhál-Tekke Expedition of 1879.—*Author.*

supply, that it would take many months to organise an expedition of sufficient strength to hinder the occupation of Herát. The maintenance of the line of communications would be almost impossible. Nevertheless, if the news of the concerted action of England and of Persia is confirmed, it will undoubtedly cause such a display of hostility in Russia as to have a bad effect on her relations with England."

This news the Berlin correspondent communicates with the object of casting a fresh shadow over the reciprocal relations of England and Russia in Central Asia. Contemporaneous with the above in Vienna, too, they hastened to express the same views and to declare that the relations between Russia and Persia were less friendly than they had been some months back.

Attitude of Persia towards Russia is declared to be a matter of indifference to the latter Power.

The politicians of Germany and Austria apparently seriously entertain the belief that it is very important for Russia that the Persian Government should be well disposed towards her. In this notion they are altogether wrong, or it may be that they only give expression to such ideas so as to occasionally encourage England, for whom it is really important as to how Persia stands towards her.

The German Press, furnished with information which it believed to be worthy of entire credence, maintained that the Russians were preparing for a march on Marv and for the approaching occupation of Afghán-Turkistán.* All at once it became known in London that the dangerous Afghán Sirdár and the lawful heir to the Afghán throne had left the limits of Russia's Central Asian territory. Abdul-Rahmán's appearance in the valley of the Amu-Daria excited great alarm amongst British Ministers, and at a Cabinet Council held on the 25th December 1879 (6th January 1880), the question was considered as to the course of action which England should pursue in the event of a Russian march against Marv being carried out in principle. The Cabinet Council decided that any such step should be met by an English expedition to Herát.

English dread of the Russians going to Marv.

The dread of a Russian march on Marv has in a strange manner blinded the eyes of English Ministers, who have decided to resort to a contrivance, the folly of which is apparent to any one who is at all acquainted with the affairs of Central Asia, Persia, and Afghánistán.

English notion that the Persians could ever take Marv quite an erroneous one.

The English Government has supposed that the Persians can possess themselves of Marv; but this idea only shows how completely it ignores the real state of affairs. It has imagined,

* This forecast has in part been fulfilled, and seems likely to be wholly so ere long.—*Translator.*

too, that it would be possible for Persian troops to occupy Herát; but it seems to have forgotten that these troops are in the worst possible condition without any fairly good officers, ignorant of drill, in abject awe* of the Tekkes, without discipline, and wanting in bravery.

The same remark applicable as regards Herát.

English interests imperatively demand, therefore, the adoption of precautionary measures against the threatening danger. The English could doubtless occupy Herát, but their base would be distant 600 *kilometres*,† *viz.*, at Kandahar, so that they would find the undertaking a very dangerous one, especially if they should be surrounded by enemies on all sides. The fact that England wishes Russia to keep away inspires her with a desire to possess herself of Marv. Thus, then, has arisen the thought of making over Herát to Persia. Sir Henry Rawlinson has steadily combated this opinion with Lords Clarendon and Palmerston and other Ministers of the Liberal Party. Persia is perfectly ready to occupy Herát without requiring any guarantees from England. On the contrary, it is England who demands guarantees of Persia. According to rumour England makes the condition that at Herát shall be established a "Resident," as in the case of the Courts of Indian tributary Rájahs, and that this English Envoy shall observe events and report thereon to his own Government. England requires also other conditions no less important. She is aware of the importance of the contingency of Russia's taking part in the *pour-parlers* now going on between the Governments of London and Teherán respecting a treaty. She is ready, therefore, to consent to the enlarging of the circle of Russia's borders in the direction of Persia, in which case the country towards Marv would be open to Russia, but only so as to allow of her completely subduing the Turkumáns.‡ By the expression *the guarding of Persia must therefore be taken to include both Marv and Herát territory.* It is said that the St. Petersburg Cabinet has not yet devoted special attention to the treaty, but it is here hoped that some friendly arrangement may be arrived at.

We do not consider it superfluous to observe that the Conservative Ministry has done little to bring their famous plan to a fulfilment. It would seem that the best method would have been to draw attention to the scheme and to represent to English society its advantages as affecting British interests. Lord Beaconsfield, who was possessed of a large share of political phantasy, endeavoured to place Persia in the same position with respect to England that Asia-Minor now occupies through the Anglo-Turkish Convention. He dreamt of the extension of English power from Calcutta throughout the whole of Southern Asia right up to Con-

Conservative policy respecting Persia and Asia-Minor.

* These words might be literally translated "mortal funk."—W. E. G.
† 373 miles.—W. E. G.
‡ Allusion is hereiu made to the Akhál-Tekke Turkumáns.—*Author.*

stantinople itself. His imagination had no bounds, and his desire was not to ascertain whether a thing was possible, so long as he had made it one of his own objects. He was enthusiastic, for he was not disconcerted by gross failures in Asia-Minor and Afghánistán, or by those which he himself occasioned in Persia. Lord Beaconsfield has been thoroughly mistaken in his calculations. He has not sufficiently weighed the fact that of the European States it has not been given to England alone to display a powerful influence on the march of historical events in Southern Asia. We imagine that Russia has no sort of idea of opposing the occupation of Herát by Persia, for this would conform to her actual position and to her relations in respect of the Eastern Question, but Russia will never consent to *exclusive English influence* as the price of the making over Herát to Persia.

To say nothing about any similar situation being very easily explained by the influence of the Russian Government in a given question, the circumstances could not be altered even though United Europe might decide on the annexation of Herát by Persia. The case might receive some such solution were England to withdraw unconditionally from interference in Herát affairs, but the whole difficulty of the matter is comprised in the method of occupying Herát. We have grounds for the belief that Persia would be too weak to take advantage of any such resolution on the part of Europe.

By such a settlement of the Herát question did the English try to hinder the further progress of the Russians into the depths of Central Asia—in the direction of Anglo-Indian territory. We do not deem it superfluous to here insert, for the further illustration of the question which we are examining, correspondence dated London, 4th (16th) February 1880 to the Vienna *Politische Correspondenz:* "In this country the Herát question has come to the front, and public opinion is much perplexed about English policy in Asia, which, however, is now only of a speculative character. Thus mention is made about guaranteeing Persia from attack on the part of Russia, when no such attack is contemplated. Of course, should the Russians wish to make an attack on Persia, they would meet England on the road, and therefore there is no necessity to guarantee in the treaty on the subject the English defence of Persia. *Mention is only made of preserving Herát from attack on the side of Russia,* in case of the probable occupation of Marv by the Russians. Sir Henry Rawlinson, the first councillor of the English Government in Central Asian questions, declared in 1878 that England must, in case of need, sacrifice all other parts of Afghánistán in order to prevent Russia from taking possession of Herát. *As soon as Russia shall have established herself at Herát, she will be in the most favourable position for extending her influence over both Afghánistán and Persia, and before her, too, will open the door into Hindustán.* In Sir Henry Rawlinson's

opinion, it is evident that the danger of a Russian occupation of Herát has come very near. The whole of Afghánistán is dissatisfied and a prey to anarchy, whilst Herát is in such a condition as to easily fall into the hands of a regular army. Furthermore, a Russian expedition against the Turkumáns is being prepared, and this, in spite of the assurances of the St. Petersburg Cabinet, might easily, through strategical or other causes, be carried on to Marv, after which a march on Herát would present no difficulty." The *St. Petersburg Herald*, several days later, gave expression to the following ideas concerning the question of the British Government freeing Persia from her undertaking not to occupy Herát. "A telegram from London," says the *Journal de St. Petersburg*, "quotes a statement made in the columns of the *Times* that the English Envoy at Teherán has received instructions to inform the Persian Government that the British Cabinet releases Persia from the obligation imposed upon her by the treaty of 1857 not to occupy Herát. We do not know (continues the *Journal de St. Petersburg*) whether this news is true or not. If it be so, then we can see in the circumstance ample testimony of the vacillating nature of English policy, which is guided, not on the principle of justice towards others, but on events arising out of personal and momentary interest, and it is based, too, on the desire to occasion evil to others. *To restore Herát to Persia has been for half a century the constant tradition of Russian policy.* Lord Palmerston always opposed this idea, and the first campaign of the English in Afghánistán, 40 years ago, had no other cause. The same views guided the British Government after the Crimean war of 1856. Now apparently this very Government is departing from its policy, of course not out of a spirit of moderation or respect for foreign interests, but from a feeling of *hatred towards Russia.* Meanwhile, if it hopes to turn Persia into a camp or advanced post in order to cover aggressive designs under the cloak of making over Herát, the combination must be supported by facts. As regards Russia, it may be asserted that she will not allow herself to depart from an honourable and rational policy based on friendly relations with Persia, and she will act on the conviction that a straightforward policy is the best. If the Persian Government does not appreciate this principle, it will act at its own risk and danger. But the Persian Government is too sensible not to perceive where lie its real friends and wherein are dictated its truest interests."

Meanwhile it would seem that the Persian Government is disposed to accept the English proposals and to listen to their suggestions, attaching too much importance to our failures in the Akhál-Tekke country in 1879. This in a measure explains the appearance of a telegram from Teherán to London bearing date 31st January (12th February) 1880, in which this passage occurs:

"It is said that the Persian Government has proposed the assembly of

a *European Commission* to mark out the frontiers of Persia on the north-east and along the line of the Atrak. Persia intends to despatch an army to occupy Seistán, and in case this cannot be accomplished she will take possession of Herát. Of course these rumours require confirmation. The English Government has the fullest information regarding the intentions of Persia, and has signified its consent to them." The same day a telegram* was received in St. Petersburg from London, which ran: "Notwithstanding the evasive statements of the British Ministry, the Cabinet is really preparing to make over Herát to Persia. As far as I have been able to ascertain, it has been proposed to establish an English General Staff in that city." Thus we find expressed the complete assurance as to the manner in which *Persia will literally be placed in a state of vassalship towards England, for it will then be impossible for her to enter into an alliance with Russia. Moreover, the march of Russian troops through Persian territory in order to occupy Marv will be frustrated.*

According to the English papers, Mr. Thomson has succeeded in concluding a treaty with Persia,† and has submitted it for ratification in London. The essential points of this treaty, according to the London *Daily Chronicle* and *Whitehall Review*, &c., are as follows:—

"1. The Government of Great Britain revokes the article in the Treaty of 1857, forbidding Persia to occupy Herát.

"2. The Persian Government is at liberty to again renew its pretensions to the country adjacent to Khurássán, and is free to enter into an agreement with the Marv-Turkumáns on the basis of the *pour-parlers* of 1877.

"3. England guarantees Persia from attack without and the integrity of her territory.‡

"4. England reserves to herself the right to have Residents at Herát, Sarakhs, and other places at which their presence would seem desirable.

"5. English troops to occupy the citadel of Herát, Persian troops the city itself.

"6. The Persian Government undertakes not to interfere with such English troops as in case of necessity would occupy any portion of the Herát province.

"7. The Persian Government consents to the appointment of English officers to command a certain proportion of the Persian Army.

"8. Persia will assist England in the event of war between her and Afghánistán.

* From the Special Correspondent of the *Gólos.—Author.*

† One of the earliest intimations regarding this treaty appeared in a telegram from London to the Paris *Globe.—Author.*

‡ At the same time the English Government purposed to establish near the mouth of the united Euphrates and Tigris, a naval station called Shat-el-Aráb. With this object she sent to Bussorah a vessel of war to make the necessary inquiries.—*Author.*

"9. Between Persia and England an offensive and defensive alliance has been concluded."

Proposed offensive and defensive alliance between England and Persia.

The offensive and defensive alliance between Persia and England, which was the very essence of the negotiations, could have in reality no importance whatsoever. Besides England herself there are only four possible enemies for Persia. These are Turkey, Russia, the Turkumáns, and Afghánistán. Now against which of these was this alliance to be directed? Against Turkey? By no means, because she is held to be under the special protection of England herself. Against Russia? Such an alliance would be a folly of the first magnitude, for the most colossal chimera could not depict Anglo-Persian allied forces in the immediate vicinity of either the Trans-Caucasus or Krásnovodsk. In like manner it would not be possible to imagine a march of English troops against Marv, for the English are the especial sympathisers of the Marv-Tekkes. Furthermore the Persians would certainly back out of any alliance directly they became aware that Marv was to be the objective point. There remains then Afghánistán. We will suppose that the *raison d'etre* of an Anglo-Persian alliance would be the bringing about of the aid which the English seek in their desire to have done with the oft-recurring and burdensome Afghán question.

This plan, like many others proposed by the English for the complete conquest of Afghánistán, was not destined to be fulfilled.

The Herát question has certainly called forth an animated controversy in the English Press. The imperative necessity of *guarding India from attack from the west*, as entertained by the English Government, is regarded as the solution of the question. It is supposed, too, that the vassal relations of Persia towards the English Government afford a sufficient guarantee that this safe-guard shall be established. But the party in opposition (the Liberal) has totally different ideas on the subject.

The more intelligent portion of English society, which was in opposition to the Conservative Ministry, being made aware of the intentions of the Government regarding Herát, put through its representatives in Parliament a series of questions to the Ministry. Lord Beaconsfield concealed the projected treaty with Persia, and stated on the 31st January (12th February) 1880, in the House of Lords, that the repeated references to the Persian Government had up to date led to no definite result. According to him the "specific" statement that England had released Persia from her undertaking not to occupy Herát was perfectly untrue. The next day Lord Granville, in the same Chamber, demanded an answer to the question put the previous day to the first Minister, and he further asked whether Lord Beaconsfield wished to declare that as regards Herát no concessions had been made to Persia, and whether, if any

concessions had been made, they were not opposed to the policy of the Government? To this the first Minister replied as follows :—"As regards the concluding portion of the question, if I were to go beyond the unconditional declaration which I have made, a misunderstanding would arise—that declaration was to the effect that the Government had not released Persia from her obligation not to occupy Herát." We have seen that the military and political events in the Afghán theatre of war operations, and likewise the unsuccessful negotiations of the English Government with Persia, compelled the former to draw back from the attractive idea of obtaining possession of Herát and to secure once for all its rich Indian possessions on the north-west frontier.

Anglo-Indian opinion against the surrender of Herát to Persia.

In Anglo-Indian circles Lord Beaconsfield's ideas are not shared, for the correspondent of the *Times* telegraphs from Calcutta that the opinion of society there is decidedly against the projected surrender of Herát to Persia. In the capital of British India it is thought that Great Britain can have no confidence in Persia, and that the projected handing over of Herát to the Sháh would weaken rather than strengthen the position of England in Central Asia, for it would impose upon the English the obligation of defending Persia, which is peculiarly open to attack from the side of Russia.

England not in a position to secure Persia from attack by Russia.

Lord Beaconsfield's project, then, to draw Persia within the sphere of the exclusive influence of England has met with complete failure, because its fulfilment would be attended with such difficulties as England could not surmount even though assisted by Persia.

By the middle of March 1880 we had already read in the English papers that England's negotiations with Persia and with Russia regarding Herát had ceased because they had led to no result. The failure of these negotiations was ascribed by foreign papers hostile to Russia to the circumstance that Russian influence at Teherán was so considerable as to easily hinder an agreement between Persia and England.* And yet in Great Britain the result was not regarded as a defeat, for, as some Englishmen believed, the Persian Government was the first to turn to England with proposals,† and that England's answer to her was that she was ready

* London correspondence of the *Politische Correspondenz* dated 3rd (15th) March.—*Author.*

† These statements are not accurate, for the idea was English. Amongst other testimony to this effect is a Vienna telegram to the *Standard*, which says—'The English envoy at Teherán carried on negotiations with Ayúb-Khán with the object of inducing him to recognise England's supremacy at Herát. Further, the Constantinople *Vakit* of the 3rd (15th) March tells us that the Teherán Government had sent to the English Ministry a note that in the event of disagreement between Russia and England regarding the occupation of Herát by Persia, the Teherán Government, foreseeing the possibility of serious complications, withdrew from the proposals *put forward by England*. The note ended with the request that Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain would consider Persia's interests, because the Sháh's Government would greatly suffer from the consequences of any quarrel between Russia and England.—*Author.*

to come to terms with Persia only upon certain conditions, and that these included, according to the foreign papers, Russia's assent to the projected course of action.

The Herát question consequently remained in the same state as it was in prior to the Anglo-Afghán complications. Persia's engagement not to go to Herát, given in the year 1857, preserved its force. Let us here observe that Sir Charles Dilke, in replying to Mr. Arnold's question of the 19th (31st) May in the House of Commons, said "it is not proposed to renew the negotiations with Persia regarding Herát, which were begun by our predecessors in office, but at the same time Her Majesty's Government wishes to see Herát and its neighbourhood under a more stable and peaceable administration."

22.—The Armed Strength of the Herát Province.

Herát a great political and military centre.

The Herát province has, during the last 20 years, been distinguished for the organisation of its armed forces. This circumstance has given to the authority of its rulers a considerable amount of independence. Frequently the Herát rulers have relied upon their well-equipped forces to throw off their own allegiance to the Amir of Kábul and to declare their complete independence.

Sultán-Ján's forces.

The regular forces of the Herát province, as organised by Sultán-Ján, were as follows :—

	Total.
Infantry, 5 regiments of 500 men each	2,500
Cavalry, 5 „ 450 „ „	2,250
Guns of various calibres	8

Recruiting.

On page 63 of the *Military Statistical Compendium*,* 3rd volume, we find the following information regarding the state of the Herát troops at the end of the year 1860 : "Recruitment is carried on by enrolment amongst the peasant class. These recruits are sometimes very young, indeed scarcely more than boys. Each Cavalry regiment is composed of men taken from a particular province. The Military Administration is centred in the person of the Commander-in-Chief, who rules over the army under the personal supervision of the head of the State. The Artillery is constituted a special command under an official called the *Topchi-*

Territorial character of regiments.

Artillery.

* Compiled in 1868 under the direction of Major-General N. N. Obrucheff, of the Russian General Staff.—*Author.*

This is a truly remarkable work giving information, of the kind indicated by its title, relating to all the principal countries of the world, including those likely to bear most upon the future of India.—W. E. G.

Báshi. The unit of the Herát regiments is the company. The titles of the Commissioned grades are borrowed from the English army. Thus we find 'General,' 'Colonel,' 'Major.' The Aide-de-Camp of the Sovereign has the title of 'Aide-de-Camp-*Báshi.*'* Discipline is very strict, and the power of those in command is almost limitless: it happens, therefore, that the lower ranks are sometimes killed with impunity. Up to the year 1862, the maintenance of the army was in good order, the soldiers receiving their rations regularly and their pay month by month. Every married soldier has a separate house for himself and family. The uniform and armament are issued by the State. The Cavalry are in receipt of pay, but their arms are their own and they ride their own horses. The armament of the infantry consists of a flint-lock musket, curved Afghán sabre, and a knife measuring from 1 to 1½ feet in length. The uniform comprises a bright blue coat spun from some light cotton material and cut in the English style with long skirts, stand-up collar, and metal buttons; pantaloons also of some cotton material, tight and very short with stripes: foot-covering are slippers worn over the naked foot: head-dress on service is the cone-shaped Persian hat; in quarters the red-pointed skull cap for old soldiers, yellow ditto for recruits. There is no difference in the uniform, &c., of the several regiments. The Cavalry wear the national Afghán costume and are armed with lances, match-locks, knives, and curved swords. Drill instruction is afforded by deserters from the Anglo-Indian Army, and is carried on in the English way. Manœuvring is well performed, and its quality is maintained by ceaseless attendance at parades. The words of command are given in English."

The Company is the unit.

Commissioned Grades.

Discipline.

State of the Herát forces prior to 1862.

Uniform, armament, &c.

Infantry uniform and armament.

Cavalry uniform and armament.

Drill instructors.

English words of Command.

In addition to its regular forces Herát, like all the other provinces of warlike Afghánistán, has militia levies. Thus the Herát province could easily put into the field 10,000 Infantry and 8,000 Cavalry to supplement the regular forces. Nor is the military strength of the province to be measured by these figures alone, for in the event of a common danger arising, the militia levies might be increased so as

Herát regular forces supplemented by militia levies.

* In the time of Sultán-Ján this position was held by Prince Vatchnadze, who was formerly an Ensign in the Russian service.—*Author.*

to embrace the Hazáras and other independent tribes to the number of 40,000 or even 50,000 men.

Period of Yakúb-Khán's proclamation of his independence as Governor of Herát.

Trusting to these resources Shir-Ali-Khán's eldest son, who was Governor of Herát, raised, as we have learnt, the standard of revolt against his father and declared himself an independent Sovereign. Taken in by his father's cunning Yakúb-Khán was subsequently seized and cast into prison, and then the Herát province once more became subject to the Amir of Kábul. The late Shir-Ali-Khán, towards the end of the year 1870, and not long before the rupture between Russia and Turkey, foreseeing that important events must take place in the east, and being extremely dissatisfied with the Anglo-Indian Government, and especially with the forcible occupation of Khelát by English troops and the treaty concluded with the Khán of Biluchistán, began to industriously develop the armed forces of Afghánistán. We have frequently spoken of this activity on the part of the famous Afghán Amir. We will now make mention of the condition of the armed forces of the Herát province during the period which preceded the Anglo-Afghán collision.

1870.

According to information obtained in the year 1877, these forces reached very considerable figures. The details relating to the year in question are as follows :—

In the city of Herát were quartered :—

I. 18 Kábul and Herát regiments of 500 men of infantry	9,000
II. Infantry of the guard	2,000
III. Regular Cavalry	2,000
IV. Irregular Cavalry (Ilyáts, Afgháns, &c.)	4,000
V. Artillery	500
TOTAL	17,500

Breech-loading rifles at Herát.

Six battalions were armed with breach-loading needle rifles; all the others with old English muskets. There were, too, in the arsenals 12,000 breech-loaders imported from England.* Moreover, in Herát itself, weapons on the newer system were being turned out by native workmen. In the city were mounted the following pieces of ordnance :—

Artillery.

I. Eight English breech-loading 6-prs. Practice with these at a

* It is notorious that English merchants carry on a very brisk trade in the sale of weapons that are being replaced by others on some new system.—*Author.*

English merchants of a certain class, in their own *free trade* interests, are ready to sell arms of precision to the enemies of their own country.—W. E. G.

mark was carried out very frequently in the presence of the Commander-in-Chief. These guns were furnished with three different charges, *viz.*, common shell, grape, and canister. With common shell the range obtained was 2,300 yards.

Charges.

II. Eighteen 6-pr. muzzle-loaders. Practice with these at a mark was carried out in the Native drill of the garrison.

III. Four brass guns, some 6, others 4-pr. in store. Each of these, with carriage, &c., can be packed on three mules.

IV. Eight 9-pr. guns, not in use.

V. Three 18-pr. guns of English pattern: one new, two old. One of the latter was cast in the time of the Sultán-Ahmad-Khán and is called "Zalzalat," or, "the earthquake."

VI. Six 6-pr. (brass) cast at Herát in 1877.

VII. Six brass guns cast at Herát by order of the Commander-in-Chief.* These are carried on mules.

VIII. Two 120 pound mortars.

IX. Six 66lb mortars.

Total number of guns at Herát in 1877.

Thus there were at Herát in 1877 61 pieces of ordnance of all kinds.

Attached to each battalion were 2 field guns and 26 mules or horses. Three mules were harnessed to each gun and one of them carried a saddle also. Two were spare for provisions, 7 carried ammunition, and the others the *matériel* of the guns. With each gun were three ammunition waggons; one of these contained spare charges. We may observe that the cost of mules is very considerable, being as much as 100 *tománs* a pair, *i.e.*, each mule is priced at about ₹150. An artillery horse cost from ₹90 to ₹120.

Mules and their cost.

The guns with each battalion can, in case of need, be easily transferred to batteries.

Generally speaking, the artillery force of Herát was put on a sound footing in the year 1877. As many as 200 mechanics and workmen, Persians, Herátis, and Kábulis, were at constant work in the *foundry*.† At the *powder factory*, too, extra time was being kept. The powder made was coarse, but of very good quality. At the same factory they were preparing powder for breech-loading guns. The sale of powder and of lead was strictly prohibited at Herát. In the *arsenal* both muzzle and breech-loading rifles were being turned out.

Artillery force of Herát on a good footing.

* *Sipah-Sala* or *Sápa-Saliar.—Author.*

† The province of Herát abounds in iron and lead mines, and these are being constantly worked.—*Author.*

They had at Herát in 1877, besides mules, 450 artillery horses. These were kept in so fat a condition as to scarcely be able to move. There was one groom to every ten horses.

Artillery horses.

Twice a day, *i.e.*, early in the morning and at mid-day, the troops attended drill. This comprised squad and battalion exercise and target practice. At the latter every soldier had to fire 10 rounds at a mark, and on such occasions all the concerned ranks had to be present. When a soldier absented himself the superior under whose immediate orders he was had to search for him during two hours. Absence without leave was severely punished. A defaulter on being caught was generally tied hand and foot and placed in confinement.

Drill.

Target-practice.

Defaulters and their punishments.

To each soldier was issued a copy of the *Korán*, and it was his duty to read this off at parade. Hence all the soldiers, immediately they were released from parade, might be found assembled on the roads and in the bazars thus engaged. To every hundred men a mullah was told off, who taught them twice a day to read the *Korán* and to write. Every Thursday evening the principal mullah assembled the whole battalion, read out passages from the *Korán*, preached a sermon, and prayed that the blessing might descend on their sovereign, the Amir of Afghánistán, and on his heir. All this was done that the soldier might not be left without occupation, that his intellect might be developed, and obedience to his rulers instilled into his mind.

Religious instruction.

In 1877 every infantry soldier received pay and rations to the value of R4½ *per mensem*. The pay was issued by the Commander-in-Chief in person, in the presence of the *Sártip* and the *Sarhang* of each battalion. Soldiers of the regular cavalry received R9 a month, and to the non-commissioned officers of the same branch of the service was issued yearly at the expense of the State a suit of uniform. There was a hospital at Herát for sick soldiers. To this was attached one doctor, one surgeon.

Pay.

At Herát there were in 1877 3,000 good camels* belonging to the Amir Shir-Ali-Khán. On these camels were brought the wheat and barley which were served out low at rates in exchange for a given proportion of

Camels.

* There were at Herát in 1878 three elephants, but during the same year two of these were sent to the army under Shir-Ali-Khán. At Kábul there were 100 elephants, at Mazár-i-Shan one. These animals were employed in transporting heavy stores and in dragging guns to elevated points. They were fed on lucerne and cakes made of flour mixed with oil and grape juice.—See Colonel N. I. Grodekoff's work entitled *Through Afghánistán*, page 124.—*Author.*

I am not sure that the work just quoted is the same as the one translated by Mr. C. Marvin, and which he calls *From Samarcand to Herát.—Translator.*

their pay. Twice a month, too, the same camels brought in firewood from the Kohsav (?) forests.

Garrison of Farrah.

In the town of Farrah, the principal point in the province of the same name, which is within the jurisdiction of the Governor-General of Herát, there were stationed in the year 1877 one battalion and two troops of yeomanry.

We will here note that the late Shir-Ali-Khán, Amir of Afghánistán, having been urged by the Beaconsfield Ministry to adopt an active policy and to agree to the plan concocted by the staff of the Indian Army in the expectation of complications in the East, replied that the military strength of Afghánistán was not yet prepared for any serious undertakings, and that not less than two years would be necessary before such time arrived. It was proposed at the time to establish such a large nucleus for the Herát army that the latter might, in case of war, and the calling out of the popular levies, be brought up to a strength of 50,000 men. Though desirous of entangling the Amir in a war, the

Russian soreness about the English occupation of Biluchistán.

English acted with an extraordinary want of tact by occupying the chief point in Biluchistán. The Amir protested, but his protest met with no result. He was naturally offended, and after forming a considerable army in his State did not know for certain where it would be needed. He recognised instinctively that Great Britain and no other Power would be the enemy of his country, so that when the English demanded of him free passage for their armies through Afghánistán and an obligation on his part to declare war against Russia, Shir-Ali-Khán at once refused and began to prepare to repulse their expected invasion.

Colonel N. I. Grodekoff,* who, in the course of his journey in 1878,

Colonel Grodekoff's information about the strength and condition of the Herát forces in 1878 is meagre.

stayed at Herát for several days, gives us but little information regarding the condition at that time of the Herát army. Nevertheless, the few particulars which he does give are very valuable, and we therefore avail ourselves of them. On the 1st (13th) November 1878, Colonel, now Major-General, N. I. Grodekoff of the General Staff rode through the vast valley of the Sanjatak-Bála, which lies in the mountains between the Darabaum settlement and the town of Kala-i-Nau. Here to meet the Russian officer there went forth about

The Hazáras.

1,000 horsemen of the Hazára tribe† (a Mongol race) with their Khán and the national standard. They were dressed in new *khalats* or robes, and

* See his book entitled *Through Afghánistán*, published in 1880.—*Author.*

† About this race, Grodekoff, on page 107 of the work last quoted, thus writes :—"The Hazáras are a Mongol race, and during the last century were, to the number of 1,000 families, removed to their present place of abode from Turkistán. They received their name from the word *hazár*, or "thousand." They speak Persian. They are an exceedingly

all carried slung behind their shoulders jingals with rests. These Hazáras wear sheep-skin caps in shape like those of the Turkumáns. In case of war the Hazáras are obliged, on a demand from the Central Government, to furnish an armed quota of mounted men.

On the 2nd (14th) November, Colonel Grodekoff had for an escort 200 armed and mounted Hazáras;* 6⅔ miles from the Kushk river he was met by about 1,000 of the *Jámshidi* inhabitants, with Mir-Khán and a national standard. The Jámshidis number about 5,000 families,† and they stand in the same relation to the Amir of Afghánistán as do the Hazáras. They are of Persian origin.

The Jámshidis.

From the Kushk river our Russian traveller was escorted by 100 armed men of this tribe.

On the 4th (16th) November, Colonel Grodekoff was met, 12 miles before reaching the town of Herát, by three troops of *Khazadars* of the *Taimur* and *Mauri* tribes,‡ who dwell in the neighbourhood. "These people were dressed in *arkhaliks* and hats of Turkumán shape, only lower. They were mounted on splendid horses of the same breed as those in the possession of the Hazáras and Jámshidis. They were armed with *jingals*, to which rests were attached. A mounted *Khazadar* receives R15 a month whether he is on service or whether he is at his own home, but in return he must be ready at any moment to turn out for a fight. When

Taimur and Mauri tribes.

well-built, handsome, and powerful race. They are in a state of vassalship to the Amir of Afghánistán, but they pay taxes to their own Khán, and are governed quite without reference to the Amir. * * Their Khán, Muhammad, lives at Kábul, as a sort of State prisoner, and his people are governed by his son. The Hazáras now number 4,000 families. They possess an excellent breed of horses, which are in no way inferior to those of the Tekke-Turkumáns. They have, too, many cattle. They are engaged in agriculture and pistachio-nut culture. They live in the midst of great abundance. * * After mutual compliments we moved off towards Kala-i-Nau, the capital of Hazára. This place is 24⅔ miles distant from Darabaum. At Kala-i-Nau there are two forts, one old, the other new, a bazaar, many mud-built houses, but the greater part of the inhabitants live in *Kibitkas*, or felt tents. The Hazáras built their forts as a protection against the Tekkes, with whom they are at constant war. It thus happens that the Hazáras make inroads upon the Marv *oasis* and carry off thence Tekkes whom they afterwards exchange for their own kinsmen who are in captivity. They at the same time improve their own breed of horses by lifting horses from amongst the Turkumáns.

The Hazaras possess a good breed of horses.

Kala-i-Nau.

To the above Grodekoff adds that these Hazáras should be distinguished from the Hazáras living along the Bámián route. The latter are called by the Afgháns *Barbari Hazáras.—Author.*

* *Hazáras* or *Hezáres* or *Khesáras.—Author.*

† On page 110 of his work entitled *Through Afghánistán*, Colonel Grodekoff gives the following particulars regarding this people: Their Khán, Ibadulla, lives at Kábul as a State prisoner, as does also his eldest son, General Mir-Alam. Ibadulla's youngest son, Aminullah-Khán, rules the Jámshidis. These people have excellent horses, and are engaged in cattle-rearing and agriculture. Like their neighbours, the Hazáras, they sometimes make raids upon the Marv *oasis*, being at constant war with the Tekke-Turkumáns.—*Author.*

‡ *Page 126.*—They received their name from Maur (Marv) to which they were deported during the reign of Nádir-Sháh, but when Marv was destroyed later on they returned to their former place of abode.—*Author.*

the men had formed up I rode out and passed down the front rank, during which ceremony a roll was played on the kettle-drum.

Artillery at Herát.

On the way to Herát Grodekoff saw several *serais* distant 1½ miles from the city walls and ⅓ mile from the road-side. In these were ranged field guns. He counted 40 brass ones. In these *serais*, too, are barracks for infantry.

Description of Herát.

Grodekoff says that the town of Herát is encircled by a brick wall 28 feet thick. "In front of this wall," he says, "is a shallow ditch. On the counter-scarp are built the houses which form part of the city. The walls have no guns mounted on them. There are no detached forts outside the city; indeed, there is nothing about the place to call to mind European fortification. With its present defences Herát would not be able to defend itself against a European army, because 1 mile to the north of the town there are heights which command the city, and from these artillery could batter down its defences. In the centre of the town rises the citadel over a skilfully-constructed dam. The walls of the citadel are 28 feet high, and they are surrounded by a deep wet ditch overgrown with reeds. In some places the walls have begun to crumble away. The buildings in the citadel are very thickly grouped together. Herát is considered to have an immense strategical importance; indeed, the English hold this city and province to be the key to India. The amount of importance which the Afgháns themselves attach to Herát may be seen from the fact that they quartered in this city and its neighbourhood, prior to their quarrel with the English, 25 battalions of infantry. Herát formed, too, the head-quarters of the Commander-in-Chief of the entire Afghán army, and pending the rupture with England 9 battalions were moved from this place to the frontiers of British India. There still remained 16 battalions and 40 guns. Cavalry regiments are not permanently maintained in the province of Herát, but according to the measure of the particular need mounted *Khazadars* are enrolled.*

Herát of immense strategical importance.

Strength of the Herát garrison prior to the Anglo-Afghán war of 1878-79.

Strength of garrison subsequently.

We will add to the above extracts that, according to the observations of this bold Russian traveller, who rode in his uniform the whole way from Táshkand through Sámarkand, Mazár-i-Sharif, Maimana, Herát, and North-Eastern Persia, discipline in the several branches of the Afghán army is very strictly upheld, although the relations between officers and men is thoroughly democratic. Indeed, the officers are on the most familiar terms with their men. For instance, if an officer is drinking tea, soldiers will come and sit beside him. If an officer is smoking his

Discipline of the Afghán army.

Free and easy relations between the officers and men of the Afghán army.

* Page 126 of work last quoted.—*Author.*

pipe (*kalián**), all his men collect around him and wait their turn for a pull. If a soldier is smoking, an officer will go up and ask for a puff. Such familiar relations do not interfere with discipline, for the soldiers strictly carry out the orders of their commanders. Flogging takes place very seldom. The standard is of the same importance amongst the Afgháns as with ourselves, *i.e.*, in its defence a man must give up his life.†

Sirdár Muhammad-Omar-Khán, Governor of Herát in 1878.

During the stay of Colonel Grodekoff at Herát, the Governor-General, Sirdar-Muhammad-Omar-Khán, touched upon politics in his conversation and said that the Russians and the Afgháns were great friends. He had himself heard much good of the Russians, but he did not like the English. The English Embassy would, he said, never be tolerated in Kábul.‡

23.—Russia and Persia.

Persian hold of Khurássân very weak.

It is a matter of notoriety that the rule of the Persian Government in the most important provinces of Khurássán is characterised by positive *weakness*. The frontier officials of Khurássán enjoy a considerable amount of independence, and very often altogether disregard the orders not only of the Central Government, but also of the Governor-General of Mashad. And, therefore, before dreaming of the incorporation of either Herát or Marv with Persia, it would first of all be essential to completely subject the outlying Persian provinces to the Central Government at Teherán.

We, however, know that the Persian sovereignty, which is called an Empire, stands in a political and military sense in the lowest grade. The Persia of our day is incomparably weaker than she was in the first quarter of the present century, when Count Paskevitch penned§ the following threat to the heir to the throne: "A year may perhaps not pass away before the dynasty of the Kájars shall have been overthrown."

* Page 51, *idem.—Author.*

† Page 80, *idem.—Author.*

‡ Page 51, *idem.—Author.*

§ This letter is so interesting that we give an extract from it. It was written in March 1829: "Let us suppose," said he, "that you will collect an army of 60,000 men, and in June will overrun our weakly-defended provinces, giving them up to pillage, but forts occupied by Russian troops will remain on your flank, for you cannot take them; these Russian forts will not surrender, because their provisions are secured. Meanwhile I, with a body of 25,000 men, will march against the Turks and will defeat them at Saganlug. I will then take Erzeroum, and in October, when the mountains are covered with snow and communications between Persia and Turkey cannot go on, I will pass through Bayazid and Khoi to Tabriz. I will again conquer Azarbaiján, and that province shall never be yours again. *A year may perhaps not pass away before the dynasty of the Kájars shall have been overthrown.* What took place during the last war shall happen again. Do not place confidence in the promises of the English nor the assurances of the Turks, for neither will aid you, and even if we overrun the whole of your sovereignty, no one in Europe will be concerned. All your political existence is in Russia's hands: she alone can hurl you from your throne, she alone can keep you there."—*See Zissermann's* article in "Our relations with Persia," *Novoye Vremga, No. 1331.—Author.*

Since that time, more than 50 years have passed away, and during that period Persia has considerably weakened, whilst Russia has assumed one of the foremost places in Europe, after having subdued the Caucasus, Central Asia, and the Turkumán steppe. One cannot therefore read without smiling the profound opinions expressed by German politicians as to the importance to Russia of good relations with Persia.

Persia fully understands the importance of cultivating Russia's good graces towards her.

About the detaching of Persia from Russia we need of course say nothing, since the Persian Government understands more clearly than does the Ministry of Great Britain the true signification of our power in Asia. The question as to Herát cannot be decided without its being ascertained that Russia admits of the principle of its possession. The archives of the Russian Ministry for Foreign Affairs could doubtless give the probable future part which Russian diplomacy will play in this business. Let us here insert an authoritative article from the *Journal de St. Petersbourg** on the subject of Russian and Persian relations, written on the occasion of some remarks on this question in the *St. Petersburgh Herald*, a paper written in the German language :—

"Our contemporary the *St. Petersburg Herald* yesterday devoted a prolix article to the position taken up by Persia in the Central Asian question, and we find therein some statements which demand on our part a certain amount of attention. The article recognises it as scarcely to be doubted but that 'betwixt England and Persia there exists a secret treaty directed against Russia.' We, on the other hand, have full grounds for the hope that the Government of the Sháh has not departed from that wise and at the same time friendly course of action which it has followed up till now respecting Russia, to its own great advantage. It is not with yesterday that the Persian Government has experienced that indecision to which every relatively weak sovereignty finds itself given over, which is placed between two great empires, both of whom must strive for the preponderance of influence in the country lying between them. Here, then, is the reason why two Powers, with diverse interests, have decided to uphold a line of action which will allow of each on friendly terms with Persia and at the same time securing for her peaceful development. This agreement received especial confirmation during the visit to London in 1844 of the late Emperor Nicholas, so that ever since Persia has enjoyed constant peace, and when between her and Turkey there have arisen disagreements on frontier questions, on the cabinets of St. Petersburg and London was the duty devolved of appointing Commissioners to decide the quarrel. The new phase into which the Asian policy of England has entered of late years cannot but influ-

* January 1880.

ence very perceptibly the relations of Persia towards her two neighbours. The Herát question on the one side and the question as to the possession of the Turkumán countries on the other concern Persia more or less closely. That English diplomacy which, in consequence of the expedition against Kábul, has come nearer to the Persian frontier, has endeavoured to draw the Teherán court into the circle of its action, is neither impossible nor improbable. But the feelings of constant friendship which the Sháh has not ceased to display to Russia will not permit us to suppose that he has entertained any proposals which could destroy this friendship. His own interests and the interests of his country afford another and certainly as trustworthy a guarantee for this. And if the choice lay before His Majesty, the Sháh, as a sagacious man, would doubtless comprehend how great dangers would threaten his country in the event of his adopting any hostile or dubious attitude towards Russia. We are able to express confidence in this matter, because in reality there exists between Russia and Persia no sort of question which could provoke collision. The question alone of the frontier on the side of the Turkumán steppes can be considered undecided, although it was long ago agreed upon to recognise the Lower Atrak as the frontier line. We speak not, however, of the border line of either Persia or Russia, but of the spheres of their influence. This treaty was, it is true, called into existence at a time when the interior of the Turkumán steppe was still without the sphere of the operations of either country. Since then, however, events have moved forward. The force of circumstances has compelled Russia to extend her operations within the steppe so as to secure the safety of her own territory in places where the frontier has not been definitely fixed, *i.e.*, in deserts wherein work robber bands of nomads, who know no law and recognise no authority. Persia maintains that she has had from of old a right to these lands and to these races, but never has she had the power of exercising such a right, and now her ability to do so is less than ever it was. Hence it may be concluded that before entering into the question of the territorial delimitation of both countries' boundaries in this direction, it will be imperative to pacify the steppe and to compel its turbulent and plundering nomad inhabitants to enter upon and follow a peaceful mode of existence. With Russia alone lies the fulfilment of this task, and experience has shewn how difficult and burdensome it will be for her, in view of the geographical features of the country and of its climatic conditions. But at present it is apparent that the interests of Persia and of Russia are absolutely one. At first Persia suffered from the pillages of Turkumán hordes, and the fruitful province of Astrábád was only quieted down when a Russian flotilla put an end to piracy on the Caspian Sea. The same thing will be effected in the steppe, where Persia must of course wish to have for her neighbour races more peacefully inclined than irreclaimable robbers. If such be her incontestable

interest then it will not have escaped the attention of her Government to how great a degree it must demonstrate to Russia its readiness to co-operate in every way, so as to at least facilitate the victualling of her troops and thus enable her to get over the one serious obstacle in the way of success to her expedition. His Majesty the Sháh has thoroughly understood this. He has in this matter not only offered the best assurances, but he has directed that the most detailed instructions in this sense be sent to his border officials. With regard, then, to these relations, we are able to assert that the Imperial Government is in a position to approve not only of the personal attitude of Nassr Eddin, but of the course of action of his Government. Unfortunately, in respect of the carrying out of the orders given, results have not always answered to expectation, because of the insufficiency of means in localities adjacent to the theatre of operations, or because of the want of loyalty displayed by local officials. At the same time we cannot convict the Teherán Cabinet of duplicity, since such would be opposed to its own interests. As regards the demand put forward by foreign papers that Persia be brought exclusively within the circle of British interests by the opening before her of the perspective of the possession of Herát, the *Herald* has justly observed that such an acquisition would meet with very important obstacles, and this because of the implacable hatred of the Merv *Sunnis* for the Persian *Shiáhs*. If in the further progress of events in Central Asia, the province of Herát should change owners, it will only come about by agreement between Russia and England, and with conditions in any fresh treaty that will safeguard the position which Persia is to take up between the two Powers. We do not intend to enter to-day into a review of the difficulties that might arise in the event of England's aggressive policy in Central Asia being laid in sharper lines. Our sole object is to correct the erroneous judgments regarding the relations of Russia and of Persia and to depict the true state of affairs, which apparently is far from appearing in the same light in which it is regarded by so many of our contemporaries."

We will here insert an extract from the *Statesman** on this subject. This paper is very competent to give an opinion on Asian affairs :—

Radical views regarding a Persian occupation of Herát.

"Nothing could be more fatal," says this worthy paper, "than the occupation of Herát by Persia, with a hostile Afghánistán between that city and the Indian frontier. Supposing, as the Russophobes maintain, that Herát is the key to India, and that the Russians burn with the desire to obtain possession of this key so as to open the door to India, we, by placing the key in the hands of the Sháh of Persia, considerably facilitate Russia's power of seizing it. From the Caspian Sea Russia could threaten Persia with an invasion which would cost the Sháh several of

* Probably the Calcutta or London *Statesman* is here meant.—W. E. G.

his best provinces before English aid could even succeed in reaching him.

Persia's choice as between an English or a Russian alliance.

To the Sháh, in fact, is presented the inevitable choice between Russia and England, and he will certainly choose the former as being the stronger of the two. With Persia and Russia against us and with a bitterly hostile Afghánistán on our frontier, we should be powerless. Moreover, Russia is more powerful on the Caspian than both England and Persia put together."

On the other hand, Arminius Vámbéry, the famous Central Asian traveller, a Hungarian by birth, and a hater of Russia, has thrown at the English and German papers articles calculated to stir up enmity towards Russia. For instance, when speaking of the Herát disturbances during which General Fakir-Ahmad-Khán was made a victim, Vámbéry cries out: "We should not have dwelt so long on this episode of the Herát troubles if behind all these complications Persia stood alone. Persia,

Persia is described by Vámbéry as the tool of Russia.

in respect of her military power, her financial resources, and her interior administration, might be reckoned as a cypher, so far as her ability to play in Central Asian affairs any important part is concerned, if behind her back there stood not a friendly Power ready at all times to afford her material support. This friendly Power, *viz.*, Russia, has lately been using every endeavour to include Persia, now almost one of her feudatory States, in the network of her own interests and influences. This circumstance has not passed unnoticed, so that on the banks of the Thames a voice has constantly been heard maintaining that Persia should undoubtedly be detached from Russia and made to come over to the side of England.

"Whether the British Government may effect this or not, the archives of the British Ministry for Foreign Affairs will in time give us the answer. In any case the watchful attitude taken up by Persia on her eastern frontier will lead to no favourable result for England, should the Court of Teherán definitely fall altogether under Russian influence, or should it have designs on Afghánistán, which would be the same as against England herself. Such a turn of affairs might really secure for Russia in Central Asia many material advantages. The Russians have, we know, undertaken an aggressive expedition against the Tekkes."

Persia's co-operation essential to the success of Russia's war against the Turkumáns.

"We have shewn," continues Vámbéry, "what vast difficulties such an expedition entails, and we have repeated that Russia can only count on success in the event of her moving in this business hand in hand with Persia, for the latter would thus furnish the Russian expedition from her northern frontiers with everything necessary in the way of supplies.* To what extent an agreement to this end

* This she actually did do during General Skobeleff's successful campaign of 1880-81.—W. E. G.

has been concluded between St. Petersburgh and Teherán we know not, still the success of the rising at Herát throws some light on the general position of affairs, which up till now has been hidden in darkness. To us it begins to be clear *that the St. Petersburgh Government, by directing an army towards Marv, has in view the aid to be extended to the Sháh of Persia in order that he may possess himself of Herát*, where he would oppose serious obstacles to British policy. The occupation of Herát by Persian troops might be justified by the disordered condition of the countries adjacent thereto, but at the same time it would aid in the fulfilment of the hopes of Iskandar-Khán. What England will do to break up all these combinations we shall know hereafter; in any case her further military operations will make it possible to approximately judge of her intentions. If the punishment of Kábul and the subsequent movement thence on Herát should be deferred till the coming spring season—and that this will be the case we have doubts—it might easily come about that the English should encounter at Herát not rebels alone, but Persians as well. This would complicate their task in the highest degree, for a Russian expeditionary force could move on Marv as soon as ever Persia* might, in her turn, declare her presence at Herát and give the word."

Supposed object of a Russian occupation of Marv.

24.—Northern and North-Eastern Persia and the Perso-Afghan Frontier.

The eastern part of Persia has of late been visited by many European travellers, and amongst these three Russians, who have published to the world an account of their travels. In 1874 Mr. P. Ogorodnikoff† visited the country, and in 1878 he published his *Sketches of Persia*. In 1878 Colonel N. I. Grodekoff rode through Herát and Khurássán. He left Táshkand on leave to go to European Russia and selected a route through Afghán-Turkistán and Persia. Grodekoff published in 1880 an extremely interesting account of this journey, with the title of *Through Afghánistán*.‡ In 1879 Colonel N. G. Petrúsevitch visited North-Eastern Persia and made public his explorations in a paper entitled *The North-Eastern Provinces of Khurássán*§.

Travellers to Eastern Persia.

* Russia in the text.—*Translator.*

† The same writer has since published a work entitled *Golden Khurássán*, which is a clear exposition of the covetousness with which Northern Persia is regarded by Russia.—*Translator.*

‡ This would appear to have been greatly curtailed by Mr. C. Marvin and presented to English readers under the title of *From Samarcand to Herát*.—W. E. G.

§ *Vide* "Journal of the Caucasus section of the I. R. G. Society" Vol. XI, No. 1 of 1880. In the same, too, will be found an interesting article by Petrúsevitch headed "*The Turkumáns between the old bed of the Amu-Daria (Uzboi) and the Northern Frontier of Persia.*"—*Author.*

All three travellers testify to the pitiable condition of the North-Eastern Frontier of Persia, arising from the incessant border wars.

According to Ogorodnikoff, the frontiers of Khurássán have been devastated by incessant Tekke raids and through wars between them and the Kurdish settlers. These Kurds are in reality semi-independent. They sometimes combine with their sworn enemies the Tekkes, plunder Khurássán, and form an open alliance* against the Persian Government.

Colonel N. I. Grodekoff does not concern himself with a description of Khurássán, but in the four last pages of his book,† he describes in bright colours the state of that part of the Persian frontier contiguous to the Afghán border and lying on the road between Herát and Mashad. He thus writes: "On the 9th (21st) November 1878, we arrived at Kuhsán, the last settled point in the direction of the Persian frontier; length of march 30 *versts* (20 miles), the first half of the road traverses a thoroughly level country, but the second portion is intersected by small ravines running down from the north. A short distance from the road and to the left flows the Hari-Rud, the banks of which are thickly covered with trees and scrub. In this forest Turkumáns frequently lie in wait for their prey. Accordingly during our march on the 9th (21st) scouts were thrown out on both sides of the road. *En route* we met people returning to Herát from Mashad, whither they had gone to bury a kinsman of the *Sapar-Salar* Hussain-Ali-Khán. Three-fourths of Kuhsán are in ruins. I was told that there is not a family in the place of which its members had not been at some time or other captive amongst the Tekkes. Here, too, they brought before me people who had been released from Khiva after the campaign of 1873. These persons bent low and kissed my hands and the skirts of my coat, blessing the White Tsár and the Russians for having released them from bondage. They asked me, 'will the White Tsár allow us to perish here also? Against the Tekkes our hope is in the Russians alone. We have plenty of land, water, and wood, but the Turkumáns outnumber all. How, then, can we live?'

Perso-Afghán frontier.

Kuhsán.

"What could I say, for here they certainly cannot live? The cook of a Sirdár who accompanied me gave me to eat for dinner the unripe grain of barley, the only local product. Three-fourths of the entire population have left the place; the remainder cling closely to it, but adopt no measures for self-defence. And yet in this unfortunate village the *Ishagási* thought it necessary to hold a parade by placing in the ranks all the local *Khazadars!* The Hari-Rud with its groves lies very close to Kuhsán. Now, the inhabitants of this place quite understand that all their misfortunes arise out of these groves, and yet they cannot cut them

The Hari-Rud at Kuhsán.

* See page 391, *Sketches of Persia.—Author.* † Pages, 127-130.—*Author.*

down. There are watch towers in all the fields. As I was to leave Afghán territory on the 10th (22nd) November, I wrote the day before a letter of thanks to Muhammad-Omar-Khán for all that he had done for me. The march to the Persian village of *Karéz* is considered the most dangerous on this route, because the river Hari-Rud flows close to the road and it has to be crossed within the limits of a forest. Accordingly on the evening of the 9th (21st) November, strong parties of mounted men were sent to the hills about and into the forest to see whether any Turkumáns lay hid. The road is perfectly level. At the point where the Hari-Rud has to be crossed, it runs in four channels, the widest of which is about 90 yards. Here the water reaches to a horse's belly. The bed of the river consists of pebbles, the current running over them in eddies. From this ford the Hari-Rud turns northwards towards Sarakhs and flows through a country wherein, in former days, there were 350 settlements, but these are now in ruins in consequence of Turkumán inroads. Indeed, the people call the locality "the land of the 350 deserted settlements." Throughout the route between Kuhsán and Karéz the terrible trace of Turkumán *alamáns* are met with at every step, and this in spite of the fact that the road lies through an absolute desert. Mounds of earth mark the spot where some unfortunate victims lie buried. These heaps rise from the very track itself and reach as far as the eye can see. I did not count the number which I saw, but it appeared to me that thousands of persons lay buried around. In consequence of the danger of the direct road between Mashad and Herát it is but little frequented, so that caravans select the circuitous route *viâ* Turbat-i-Haidari and Kaf to Ghurián. How small must be the traffic along the first-mentioned route can be gathered from the fact that the Karéz *zakát* post has been farmed out for 24,000 *roubles* (£2,400) per annum. As we drew near to the ruins of Káfir-Kala, we saw a cloud of dust to the left of the road. Supposing that this was caused by Turkumáns the *Ishagási* sent about 100 men in that direction. It turned out that the dust was raised by a caravan which had selected the road near the mountains, so that if it was attacked by Turkumáns those with it could take shelter behind rocks and defend themselves. The people with the caravans taking the mounted men riding towards them for Turkumáns got ready for a fight. After satisfying them on this point our escort joined us at the ruins of the Dogar-Rabát (serai), which mark the boundary between Persia and Afghánistán. At Dogáru the *Ishagási* wrote a letter to the Elder of Karéz, who sent 30 mounted men to

Karéz (Persian village).

The land of the 350 deserted settlements.

Traffic at Karéz as shown by the tolls exacted.

Point marking the boundary line between Persian and Afghán territory.

meet and escort me to his village. The *Ishagási* himself did not think he had the right to cross the border, but as he considered the Persian escort which had been sent insufficient, he ordered 100 of his men to accompany me, and remained at Dogáru awaiting their return. On drawing near to Karéz I gave the official who had come with me a letter to say I had reached the above place in safety. In spite of the solicitude for my safety and comfort displayed throughout the route between Mazár-i-Sharíf and Dogáru, I felt relief on entering Persian territory, where I knew that I should no longer have to place sentries or feel that people were following me. And yet at the very first step I took from Karéz regret arose within me that Afgháns no longer formed my escort, and a feeling of complete helplessness was very sensible."

Dogáru.

Petrúsevitch, in his articles *The Turkumáns between the old bed of the Amu-Daria (Uzboi) and the northern limits of Persia and the north-eastern provinces of Khurássán*, gives a circumstantial account of the condition of that part of the Persian frontier contiguous to the country of the Turkumáns. According to him the plundering excursions of these robbers are more frequent and on a larger scale along the Persian frontier. *The whole of the northern and eastern portions of Khurássán and right up to the borders of Herát is irreclaimably devastated.* In one district alone which lies close to the frontier there were at one time on the left bank of the Hari-Rud 460 settlements of which not more than 20 now remain to eke out an existence. In like manner have been over-run the northern portions of the provinces of Kalát, Daragaz, Kuchán, and Bujnurd. Petrúsevitch says*: "Settlements are now only held where a mountainous locality renders them inaccessible. In all other places the settlements have been destroyed, so that the whole of the northern bank of the Atrak and the country to the east of Bujnurd is without a dwelling, and this because Yamúts, Gokláns, and especially Tekke-Turkumáns there reign supreme." The inroads of the Yamút and Goklán-Turkumáns have since almost ceased, thanks to the movement of Russian troops on the eastern littoral of the Caspian. But the plunderings of the Tekkes continue. Not later than 1877 a party of this robber race fell upon the Persian district of Turbat-i-Sheikh-i-Jám, which they devastated, driving off 30,000 sheep and carrying away many captives. In 1878 a large band of Marv-Tekkes approached quite close to the town of Mashad, with its 70,000 inhabitants; they then sacked the settlement of Turuk, which lies within 4⅔ miles of the capital of Khurássán and contains 500 families. The Tekkes of Akhál have even got as far as the southern road connecting Sháh-Rud and Mashad—a distance, that is, of 200 miles from their own nomad camps—

* See page 59 of the article "*The Turkumáns between the old bed of the Amu-Daria (Uzboi) and the northern limits of Persia.*"—*Author.*

and have destroyed Persian settlements. The Marv-Tekkes, too, have reached to the provinces of Kain, distant 666⅔ miles from Marv, and have destroyed everything *en route* that there was to destroy. The Persian Government weakly defends a stretch of frontier (measuring 666⅔ miles) contiguous to the Tekke and Sárik Turkumáns. It, however, leaves the provinces of Kuchán, Bujnurd, and Daragaz to protect themselves from the plundering inroads of their neighbours, and it keeps at Mashad* four *faujis* of infantry of an actual strength of not more than 2,000 men† with a considerable number of utterly worthless guns. "The Persians, as we have seen," says Petrúsevitch, "are not in a position to pacify the Tekkes or even to defend their own borders from Tekke and Sárik inroads. The inhabitants of the Persian frontier are therefore in the most pitiable plight. They consequently must either enter into a compact with the Tekkes, as is done at Kálta-Chinár, in the province of Daragaz, or they must have fear every moment for their lives. In those settlements which lie nearest to the Tekkes hope centres in the Russians alone, for the conviction is deep-rooted amongst the people that they will come sooner or later and subdue the Tekkes as they have subdued Khiva, Bukhara, Khokand, and the Yamúts. Thus alone will it be possible for a peaceful population to live, without the feeling of fear at every hour of life." Further on Petrúsevitch says: "Thus will confusion in the administration and meanness amongst the officials from high to low, and the cowardice which is an element of every Persian, lead to something if the Tekkes are still longer permitted a freedom to pillage Persia, and if only the dread in which they hold the Russians does not compel them to recognise Persian supremacy and to confirm their allegiance to Persian authority by some sort of stable guarantees. These facts, the correctness of which cannot be gainsaid, paint a clear picture of the desolation of the once flourishing Persian province of Khurássán and also of the now almost utter absence of authority of the Persian Government."

Persian frontier defenceless against the raids of Tekke and Sárik Turkumáns.

25.—Russian's treatment of her subjects in Central Asia.

In a war with Asiatics, who only understand the right of the strongest, it is often necessary to inflict heavy defeat not only on troops but also on towns and their inhabitants. In the heat of battle, when a town has to be taken by storm, the use of force against an armed populace is very comprehensible. This has been the case in our own wars in Central Asia; indeed, it is often the unconditional necessity of warfare.

But when the fight is over, Russian soldiers, in obedience to the

* At Sarakhs and Kalát there are small garrisons which furnish small guards at the various posts.—*Author.*

† According to returns 4,000.—*Author.*

sacred call of military discipline, never allow themselves to take undue advantage of a fallen foe. Never even in the Caucasus, wherein was waged a bloody war, did the Russians introduce a cold-blooded reign of terror.* The Russian officer and soldier is merciful towards his enemy. Here is the secret of our prestige, herein lies our strength, and with this weapon shall we overcome the English in Asia.

Russian prestige in Central Asia due to moral rather than material force.

Russian prestige in Central Asia is really great, but it derives its force not so much from material as from moral superiority in that quarter. We deal with the natives as with people having the same right to exist that we have ourselves; our attitude towards Native States, even when weak, is void of bluster, whilst it takes cognisance of their rights. We have no essentially *Asian* policy, for our policy there is based *on the same principles of international right as regulate it in Europe.* In this fact lies our strength, and at the same time our superiority over the English, who,

Russia's treatment of Asiatics opposed to that adopted by England.

through the force of their national character, act in a diametrically opposite way. They love to triumph over the weak and desire that the latter should be sensible of their complete superiority. The English will at length have to acknowledge that the endurance of their dominion in India is not threatened by Russian bayonets drawing near to the frontiers of Afghánistán, but by the ever-widening circle of the moral influence of the Russian name. Until the Russians became known in Central Asia, the English sat securely in India and there did as they pleased, but when rumour notified the approach of a fresh European Power, humane, merciful, simple and at the same time strong, things became altered. This rumour crossed the Hindu-Kush, passed through Afghánistán, and penetrated to India. The English themselves aided in the dissemination of this rumour, and by declaring war against the unfortunate Shir-Ali, showed the people of India that they were afraid of this new Power.

[Here is inserted a comparison—unfavourable it is needless to add—made by the *London Statesman* between English policy in India and Russian in Central Asia.]

We cannot refrain from observing how little the action of the English in Afghánistán resembled our own in Central Asia. With scarcely an exception, even when war was directed against ourselves and after it had proved disastrous to the people, we released our vanquished enemy from the payment of taxes: we not only forgave what were falling due, but also those which had not yet been collected by the deposed Native ruler, and after making these concessions, we imposed taxes at a lower scale than those paid to either Kháns or Amirs.

Non-interference with religion and customs, release from taxation, humane treatment of a recent enemy, and many other traits that we do

* The said bloody war has given rise to the expression of "War in the Circassian fashion" which is in use throughout the Russian army.—W. E. G.

not see in the case of the English, have led to the rapid pacification of the provinces which we have conquered in Central Asia. In such instances in which our troops have occupied provinces that we had no intention of permanently administering, as, for example, the Kárshi province and Shahr-i-Sabz occupied in 1868 and 1870 respectively by General Abramoff, we altogether abstained from interfering in the domestic affairs of the people. The occupation of the Khivan Khánate in 1873 by General Aide-de-Camp Von Kaufmann 1st serves as a brilliant example of these relations. There can be no doubt but that Sayad-Muhammad-Rahim-Khán, Khán of Khiva, prior to the conquest of his Khánate, belonged to the number of our most foresworn enemies, and when Khiva was taken this Khán fled to the Turkumáns, but as soon as he had recovered from his first terror and saw that the Russians treated an enemy humanely, he came to General Kaufmann and was restored to his power. The results are manifest. The Khán now respects and listens to the advice of the Russian Government; and our Government, in its turn, respects the power of the Khán and does not interfere in the affairs of the Khánate: its people consequently are peaceful and willingly enter into friendly trade relations with our own countrymen.

Have the English so behaved towards Yakúb-Khán? Evidently they have acted in a totally opposite manner, and this because they feel their own weakness.

26.—Russian and English travellers in various parts of Central Asia.

The last Russian who visited Herát was Colonel (now General) Grodekoff, of the General Staff, and he never concealed either his errand or his personality, for he rode through the whole of Northern Afghánistán, from the Amu-Daria to Herát, and on to the frontier of Russian Khurássán, *in the uniform of a Russian officer*. This is not the case with English officers of the order of Lieutenant-Colonel Stewart, who move along the border-land of the Tekkes of Marv and Akhál in the guise of Armenian merchants, as though they were commissioned to give contracts for the supply of horses for the Indian cavalry. Neither is it so in the case of Major Butler of the English service, who, we know from what the *Globe* has told us, gave advice to the Tekkes as to how to construct forts for defence against the Russians. Still we in no way desire to inculpate the British Government in the intrigues of its official agents against us in Central Asia. We only note the fact, and suppose that the wise example of this Government in its active protection of the interests of the English people will find, when the time arrives, a corresponding imitation. We consider it not superfluous to express the deep conviction that a political game of this kind will not prove advantageous to the English, since we are *very poor* in Southern Asia, whilst the

English are *very rich* there; and if we are beaten in this game, we have scarcely anything to lose, but if the English are beaten in it, they will lose everything. In this is comprised our strength, and on the English themselves depends their future position in Southern Asia.

In any case this idea is based upon the fact that a corresponding amount of attention has been turned to it by Russian politicians and strategists, for, in the future solution of the still unsettled Eastern Question, the last place will not be occupied by the relative positions of Russia and of Great Britain in Central and Southern Asia.

27.—Value placed by the Russians on the high standard of their high prestige in Central Asia.

We are not in the least inclined to depreciate the importance of the Russian name in Central Asia. We rejoice that that name stands so high, and that Russian prestige throughout Asia is so vast. This constitutes a matter for national pride. But we cannot avoid observing that, with the exception of sending General Stolaitoff's Mission to Kábul in 1878,—a course that the English themselves compelled us to follow—we have as yet advanced not a single step towards showing that we have decided to begin a serious struggle with the English in Central Asia. We recognise very clearly that, if a struggle is destined to be, such a struggle will be *terrible*, but more so for the English than for ourselves, since we really shall lose nothing in Central Asia, whilst the English, in case of defeat, stand the chance of being deprived of their rich Indian Empire.

The despatch of General Stolaitoff's Mission to Kábul explained.

During 1877-78 the Russian Government, though fully able to declare an active policy in Central Asia, without withdrawing a single soldier from the European theatre of war, there preserved complete order and designedly avoided everything which could occasion uneasiness on the Afghán border. History will rightly appraise this far-seeing policy of our Government, which strives after the pacification of Asia and at the same time will condemn the nervous activity of the English, who thoughtlessly and in pursuit of a false fear precipitated a struggle with the unfortunate Afghán people.

Russia takes credit to herself for not directly interfering in the Anglo-Afghán war.

In all the misfortunes which they experienced in Afghánistán, the English reproached the Russian Government and people. Was not a Russian Mission sent to Kábul in 1878 to gain the Amir, Shir-Ali-Khán, over to the side of his northern neighbour; and was not this Mission, according to the English, the origin of the war of 1878-79*? The

* There can be little doubt, I think, that the real object of the despatch of a Russian Mission to Kábul in 1878-79 was to provoke a war between England and Afghánistán with a view to testing the offensive power of the English in India. How such an object has answered can best be seen by subsequent events.—W. E. G.

English, however, forgot that their hostile relations with Russia prior to the Berlin Congress and later on gave the Russian Government occasion to seek out, and even now imposes the duty on it of seeking out, means whereby, in case of war with England, the greatest possible injury might be done to her. We have sought out these means in Southern Asia, where English rule is not characterised by that indisputable power apparent elsewhere, but where, nevertheless, are centred colossal English interests. This is perfectly reasonable, and it is only to be regretted that the Russian Mission to Kábul was sent too late. To reproach the Russian Government for sending that Mission to Afghánistán is the same as if the English, after declaring war against us, began all at once during the war to revile us if our troops fired at theirs with ball cartridge instead of blank.

Although the despatch of a Russian Mission to Kábul had, perhaps, an influence on the political ideas of the Afghán Amir in that it finally detached him from the English, still the matter might have been arranged in a peaceful manner if the British Government had not placed before Shir-Ali-Khán unreasonable demands. On this point there are very serious proofs. Moreover, Shir-Ali-Khán was not the man to risk the peace of his own country and his personal position for a shadow, for he had with the greatest difficulty succeeded in uniting in one whole the various provinces of Afghánistán.

28.—Dread on the part of the English regarding Russian aggression in Central Asia, and especially towards Afghánistán.

We here observe one very curious feature in the character of those English whose lot has been cast in India. As a rule the English are thought to be a quiet, calculating, and even a cold people. But to our surprise, we find exactly the opposite qualities distinguishing those Britons who live in India. An unfounded terror, extraordinary phantasy, a striking inconsistency, are the qualities which are noticeable in the English in Southern Asia. This terror is partly explained by the insecure nature of their rule in India and by the conviction they possess that the final object of the advance of the Russians into the depths of Central Asia is a campaign against India. In these ideas they are upheld by the voice of the people of India. The development of phantasy and of inconsistency apparently proceeds from a desire to gain renown and from a feeling of irresponsibility. Coming to the country for a relatively short period, the English endeavour to extract as much gain as possible during their stay in rich India.

English dread of Russian aggrandisement.

In all this we see how great a dread the Engish have of the development of Russian power in Southern Asia. This is a very gratifying thing for our national pride, and we of course are not disposed to depreciate the

importance of this indication of our power. The correspondent of the *Standard* with General Phayre's force telegraphed, under date 24th August (5th September) as follows: "Of the *Russians, who, according to repeated native reports,* are in Ayúb-Khán's camp, we as yet know nothing.' From this news it is evident what a high opinion the Afgháns have of the power of the Russians. This is indeed a fact, and there is much to show that the same opinion about the Russians exists throughout Southern Asia, as far as Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta.

English dread of Russian influence in Afghánistán.

We consider it useful to here give some extracts* from General Roberts's letter, dated Kábul, the 10th (22nd) November, in which he sketches to a certain extent the dread of Russian influence in Afghánistán.

[Here follow lengthy extracts from General Roberts's letter, addressed presumably to the Indian Government.]

This letter is in many respects worthy of serious attention. We should have much wished that General Roberts's assurance regarding the importance of Russian trade at Kábul had been true, but we doubt it and think that it is an invention put forward with the object of justifying the Beaconsfield Cabinet in its risky policy in Afghánistán.

29.—English suspicion of Russian "Scientific Expeditions" on the Borders of Afghánistán.

Abdul-Rahmán-Khán has now been advanced to the front rank as a *protégé* of Russia. He is considered to be Yakúb-Khán's most dangerous rival. His influence in Badákhshán is acknowledged to be undoubted, and this influence has recently become still stronger through his marriage with a daughter of the ruler of Badákhshán. Now Badákhshán has recently been explored by Colonel Matvaiyeff, and therefore the English suppose that the Russians possess more minute information with regard to that country than does the Anglo-Indian Government. Throughout London a very sensational report is current that the Russians have recently established cordial relations with the Afghán leaders on the north side of the Hindu-Kush, and that their agents are very popular in those parts. The English Government must, it is said, quickly take up strategical points on the Hindu-Kush, otherwise the Russians can easily forestall them. They will not even let alone a purely scientific expedition for the survey of the valley of the Oxus. It is shown how that for the purposes of this expedition the naval command at Fort Peter-Alexander† has been increased by 10 officers and 150 sailors and that two flat-bottomed steamers are on their way to the fort named. The appearance on the Oxus (Amu-Daria) of such a large and brilliant expedition with a whole party of experienced officers cannot, it is said,

* Taken from the *St. Petersburg Gazette.—Author.*
† Petro-Alexandrovsk.—W. E. G.

fail to produce a deep impression on the Afgháns of Bálkh, Badákhshán, and Kunduz.

30.—Russian news regarding the despatch of a British Mission to Kabul in contrast to the vagueness about the presence of Russian officers in Afghánistán.

In the Russian newspapers of the day particulars were given regarding Major Cavagnari's Mission, of its arrival at Kábul, of the triumphal entry accorded to it by the Afghans, and of the gradual establishment of English influence over Afghánistán.

The German Press, with a view to spoiling the relations between Russia and England, and being ready to seize the occasion of the Anglo-Afghán struggle, began all at once to circulate in Western Europe a false report to the effect that it was the positive intention of the Russian Government to occupy Afghán-Turkistán. The German newspapers asserted that Russian troops would be moved along the left bank of the Amu-Daria, and would thence proceed to occupy all points of strategical importance in Northern Afghánistán, and that these would be relinquished only when the English had given up the positions that they had taken up in Central and Southern Afghánistán. After this, the same papers circulated a rumour that the Russians had decided to conquer Afghán-Turkistán with the aid of Abdul-Rahmán, on whom they would confer a large sum of money. The English became greatly alarmed, but were quieted to a certain extent when a telegram was published by the *Daily News*, dated Berlin, 23rd October (4th November) to the effect that General Kaufmann had reported at St. Petersburg that without money and without provisions the projected occupation of Afghán-Turkistán by the Russians could not be carried out.

[Here follows an extract from the *Globe* on the same subject.]

In London the news was spread abroad that Abdul-Rahmán *had left* Russian-Turkistán accompanied *by several Russian Officers*. The Conservative portion of English society expressed its opinion through its own organs to the effect that the appearance of this Sirdár in Afghánistán was the result of intrigue directed by the Russian Government with the object of injuring the English and of shaping the Afghán question in its own interests. The more sensible section of English society held another opinion. Lastly, there were voices which said that *very naturally the Russians must try to injure the English who had so often brought evil to Russia in the course of the settlement of the Eastern Question.*

But all were wrong. When Abdul-Rahmán crossed the frontier, he was accompanied by Afgháns only. There were no Russians with him and there could be none, for that would have been opposed to the principles of the Russian Government, which acts in Asia with dignity and honour.

On the 8th (20th) January a Calcutta telegram was received in London, in which it was stated that, according to information received from Afghán-Turkistán, the authority of Gulám-Haidar-Khán, the ruler of the country, had considerably lessened, and that of Abdul-Rahmán there was no news at all.

[Here follow references to the *Standard*, *St. Petersburg Gazette*, and to a Lahore telegram dated 31st January (12th February) 1880, all speaking of the want of knowledge regarding Abdul-Rahmán's whereabouts.]

The secret action of this Sirdár excited great commotion amongst the English, for they did not know with what intentions regarding themselves he had appeared in Afghán territory *i.e.*, would he be their enemy or would he agree to enter into negotiations with them?

Many supposed that Abdul-Rahmán, as the sole direct descendant of Dost-Muhammad and as enjoying influence in the country, would be in a position to give to the combination of the Afghán tribes a more serious importance if he were to place himself at the head of affairs. But he had appeared on the scene late in the day, and it was doubtful, so thought the English, whether he could gain over to his side the Uzbaks of Turkistán. They were of opinion, however, that he could collect about him the remnants of the Afghán army, a considerable portion of which was on the north side of the Hindu-Kush, and all those who were fit to bear arms amongst the large Ghilzai colony of Bálkh.

When reflecting as to how the Maiwand catastrophe could have been brought about, the English in India found the elucidation of events in *Russian intrigues*.

The Calcutta correspondent of the *Times*, in a telegram dated 27th July (8th August), made the following statement: "From the enemy's choice of position, from the manœuvring of his troops and accuracy of their fire, from the fact that there were so many men on their side armed with breech-loaders, and, lastly, from the circumstance that one entire battery consisted of breech-loading cannon, it may be supposed that *Russian aid* was afforded."

Sirdár Ayúb-Khán, Yakúb's half-brother, and the ruler of Herát, had managed to defeat the English in the open field, and to do so according to all the rules of the art of war. This circumstance was sufficient to create the conviction in the minds of the English that the Russian Government had assisted the talented Afghán.

The calm and thoroughly praiseworthy attitude of the Russian Government towards the struggle between the English and the Afghán people astonished Western Europe, for there was no desire to believe that it really was so; they would not allow that Russia could possibly preserve an honourable neutrality, for it was supposed that she would in secret oppose the aims of the English. We must here remark that the

Anglo-Afghán War of 1879-80 trenched very little upon Russian interests in Central Asia, and we imagine that the military successes of the English in Afghánistán would draw upon themselves political failures. In deciding to permanently annex Kábul and Kandahar to British India, England would be obliged to increase the number of the British troops in India by at least one-third. This step would weaken her position in India and always expose her to the danger of a renewal of a struggle with the warlike Afgháns. For the occupation of Herát and the conquest of Afghán-Turkistán another corps of 20,000 men would be required, whilst for the garrisons of Kandahar, Ghazni, and Kábul, and for the line of communications 30,000 men at least would be necessary. The result would be an increase of 50,000 men and an extra charge on the war budget of India of £4,000,000 sterling which, in the first year, might in all probability be nearer £5,000,000. At the close of the year 1857, the total strength of the Indian Army amounted to 200,000 men and the war budget then exceeded £16,000,000 sterling. But with the extension of territory as above indicated the English troops would found themselves alongside the Russian advanced posts.

On the one side, *viz.*, near the banks of the Amu-Daria, the English would have as neighbours the Army of Turkistán, of a strength of 50,000 men, and towards the west they would be near the advanced guard of the Army of the Caucasus, comprising 250,000 troops. Such near relations, in view of the special interest shewn by the Indian subjects of the Queen-Empress for the power of Russia in Asia, might be inconvenient, even in the very slightest degree, for the English.

31.—Efforts made at Berlin and Vienna to create ill feeling between England and Russia.

We would once more invite the attention of the reader to the several Press rumours started in Western Europe on the subject of Afghán complications and the part which Russia is likely to play in this question. Although a considerable portion of these rumours are devoid of any solid basis, whilst a good half of them are simply given out, principally by Germans, for the sake of sowing dissension in the relations between Great Britain and Russia, they are, nevertheless, not without their own importance, and frequently attain the object after which the authors are striving. Moreover, in the present age, the Press is possessed of a vast political force, to ignore which would be in the highest degree imprudent. This truth is excellently borne in mind by the English Government, which diligently follows everything that is said about the Afghán question, and especially the relations of Russia towards it.

The reciprocal rivalry of the European States and the real dread of the growth of such a colossal Power as Russia, could not but induce European politicians to excite the people of Western Europe against the Russian Empire. We have thousands of witnesses to the fact that in the capitals of Europe News Agencies are engaged in spreading false intelligence regarding the intentions and objects of the Russian Government. For some time past Berlin and Vienna, united by a common interest, have been hostile to the development of the Sláv race, and have put themselves at the head of a skilful propaganda that is actively engaged in exciting the English against the Russians and Russian operations in Central Asia, and in labouring by every available means to entangle Russia in serious enterprises in Asia so as to take off in this way her attention from the west to the south.

Efforts made at Berlin and Vienna to excite the English against the Russians.

Sensational telegrams from Berlin and Vienna and articles penned by German politicians have had a strong effect on the Conservative portion of English society, which dreads a Russian movement against India. These exciting causes do not permit the more healthy section of English society to raise its voice on behalf of a more moderate attitude with regard to the Afghán question.

The effect of these efforts on the Conservative Party of English politicians.

Immediately after the English occupation of Kábul, a telegram was sent from Berlin to the *Daily News* stating that *Russia had resolved to move an army into Afghánistán*. This telegram had its effect, and the English Government was still more strengthened in the belief that in the campaign which we are describing it was carrying on a warfare not with the Afgháns exclusively but with the Russians as well. Many papers had begun to point out that Herát was in most untrustworthy hands, for, was not its ruler Ayúb-Khán, a man described by the English Press as having gone over to the side of Russia from the date of the signing of the Treaty of Gandamak, when he gave himself out to be the heir of the Amir Yakúb-Khán? The report which had been spread regarding the march from Herát of 13 regiments against the English enabled the Press, with very few exceptions, to prove to the Government the absolute necessity for an occupation of the province of Herát by English troops.*

After this a telegram, dated 7th (19th) October, was sent from Berlin to the *Standard* in which the following *regarding the intentions of the Russian* Government concerning Afghánistán was announced: "Since the receipt of the telegram notifying the English occupation of Kábul, Russia has been inclined to look upon Badákhshán, Wakhán, Herát, and the whole of Afghán-Turkistán as independent territory, with which it might

* The *Morning Advertiser* published a letter in which the immediate occupation of Herát was demanded, and in which it was asserted that this town in English hands would become the source of unfailing wealth.—*Author.*

be possible to have dealings perfectly apart from all former treaties relating to the Afghán monarchy, which had in Russia's eyes been upset. This view coincided with the time when the English Government had appeared to have no idea of entering into any sort of special understanding with regard to the future of Afghánistán. If Russia shall act in conformity with this view, *we must expect a Russian movement from Darwáz towards the long-coveted territories of Badákhshán and Wakhán, famous for their gold, precious stones, grain, and camels.*"

News of the Russian occupation of Marv proves to be premature rather than altogether untrue.

As a climax to everything a telegram was sent to London in October on the subject of the annexation of Marv by the Russians. This news fell like a thunderclap on all sections of English society. Although the rumour was speedily contradicted by the English Government, a false impression had been produced, and the settlement of the Afghán question was still further complicated. According to English strategists, Marv is the key to the possession of Herát. "*Possessed of Herát, Russia would have her hand on the throat of India,*" so said General Rawlinson.

32.—General Soboleff's opinion of the effects of the Conservative policy with regard to Afghánistán.

For more than four years past the London and Anglo-Indian Press has, from day to day, with a perseverance and an energy worthy of surprise, maintained that Russia in the pursuit of an onward policy in Central Asia forces Great Britain to take fresh and decided steps to guard the north-west frontier of India from danger.

Such alarm is doubtless destitute of solid foundation, for the conviction that Russia is aiming at a limitless seizure of territory in Central Asia rests on an erroneous comprehension of our operations in this part of Asia. The conviction, however, certainly leads English society on to the path of false alarms and apprehensions, and English Ministries to objectless, difficult, and even dangerous conquests.

The Conservative Ministry of Great Britain, and in like manner the Government of India, should be made very clearly to understand that the military power of the English in India is confined to very narrow limits. It has vigour, but only within the strict frontiers of India. Beyond those frontiers, even in a struggle with weak Afghánistán, this power has proved itself to be almost futile. We think that although they were successful in the Afghán war they did not completely attain all those political objects in Central Asia after which they were striving. On the other hand, we stand thoroughly amazed at the truly gigantic programme sketched out by the Conservative Ministry with regard to Herát, Afghán-Turkistán, and even Marv. This programme is quite at variance with their military position in Southern Asia. To carry it out

it would be necessary to increase the Indian army by at least 50,000 men, and to employ more administrative officials.

The seizure of Eastern and Southern Afghánistán would entail an addition to the war budget of £5,000,000, or considerably more than ₹50,000,000 *per annum*. But even the present position of India moves some Englishmen to a state of dissatisfaction and misgiving. This is what is said on the subject by a London Liberal paper.

[Here follows an extract from what reads like the writing of the *London Statesman*.]

Extensive scheme of conquest devised by the Conservative Government.

On account of the rising in Badákhshán and other parts of Afghánistán, especially at Herát, the complete conquest of Afghánistán was taken into consideration. At the head of the powerful English party which called for this policy of subjugation, stands General Sir Henry Rawlinson, formerly in the Indian service, and a person very well acquainted with the Central Asian Question. His writings are therefore readily perused by the English Government. General Rawlinson's *Note on the Central Asian Question* was handed to the Ministry on the 8th (20th) July 1868. It had been prepared under the orders of Mr. Disraeli (afterwards Lord Beaconsfield) and was full of unfounded accusations directed against Russia. Still it has served during the past six years as the programme of English operations in Central Asia. The greater portion of the measures adopted by the English Government in this question—and these include several of primary importance—were carried out under the advice of Sir Henry Rawlinson.

Sir Henry Rawlinson's views on the Central Asian Question.

In view, then, of what has just been stated, the exposition of General Rawlinson on the position of the Afghán question at the close of the war of 1878-79 will not be devoid of interest. We consequently here insert an epitome of the views expressed in Sir Henry Rawlinson's article in the *Nineteenth Century*:—

"I thought then, as I think now, *that India during the past year was threatened with a real and terrible danger* which ought to have been repelled by firm and skilful treatment, and I should add that, in my opinion, this danger, although temporarily staved off by firm measures on the part of the Viceroy, and although cast into the background by the conditions of the Treaty of Gandamak, can arise at any moment, if our watchfulness is relaxed, or if, under the influence of the spirit of party, our most recent political action in Asia be overturned by any future Government."

The 'scientific frontier' acquired during the last campaign is, in General Rawlinson's opinion, not without serious defects. Whilst satisfied with the acquisition of the Kuram Valley, the Khaibar Pass, and the Pishin Valley, Sir H. Rawlinson regrets the restoration of Kandahar to the Afgháns, because he thinks that the possession of this city would

secure India from invasion from the west, better than would the holding of the "scientific frontier." Finally, General Rawlinson says that "the Afghán treaty of peace,* though very good in itself, is not without flaws, and it has not been carried out. In order to obtain for us a complete measure of defence, this treaty would have to be amplified by all legal precautions and guarantees. Persia must be detached from Russia at whatever cost. Russia herself must not be left in uncertainty with regard to our intentions; she must be given to understand that it is quite time for her to give up her aggressive preparations; that she will not be permitted, without opposition, to establish herself on the Afghán frontier—whether at Marv, Sarakhs, or even at Abiverd—nor will she be allowed to renew her intrigues against English dominion in India. In fact it is necessary that *it should be seen beforehand that we are ready in our self-defence to support the Turkumáns with arms and money, or even to encourage the Uzbaks to get back their freedom.*

"More important than all at the present time we must show ourselves to be strong on our threatened frontier and be prepared for any eventuality. It would be almost madness at such a moment to recall our garrison from Kandahar, for, in case the danger grew nearer, by remaining at Kandahar an English army could occupy Herát and afford aid to the Afghán garrison."

From this we see in what direction General Rawlinson is turning the attention of his Government.

Although the Beaconsfield Ministry had declared that it was satisfied with the acquirement of "a scientific frontier," in England they knew very well what was the value of such a declaration. The *Daily News* remarked with perfect justice on this subject in one of its leading articles: "if in a new Parliament a majority of votes should favour the Conservative Party, we should almost certainly begin a fresh war with Afghánistán, with the object of correcting what is now called 'our scientific frontier' with that country."

We have only inserted the above extracts in order to shew that the Afghán question is in reality far from being settled in the sense desired by the Conservative Ministry of Great Britain. We think that the fresh Afghán war which has begun sooner than was expected might serve as the means of finishing what was not effected during the preceding winter. Still we cannot fail to observe that all the English operations in Afghánistán are based on the *terror, clear to nobody and therefore a terrible danger,* which threatens India from the north-west. This terror incites the English Government to a course of action in the highest degree risky.

But the war entered upon with the late Shir-Ali considerably altered for the worse the position of the English in India.

* Here he speaks of "The Treaty of Gandamak."—*Author.*

The Government of Great Britain has entered upon the slippery path of political enterprises, and this we do not for a moment doubt will lead to a very serious break-up of its affairs.

Political errors involved in the invasion of Afghánistán.

Not once, in the course of the campaign of 1879-80, were the English brought to the knowledge that in the invasion of Afghánistán they committed one of the grossest political errors, and under circumstances where such errors might, in certain eventualities, lead to the most fatal consequences. They saw and recognised that those objects which they had resolutely placed before themselves prior to the war with the former Amir, Shir-Ali-Khán, were gradually vanishing out of sight, and that all the sacrifices which the English Government had ungrudgingly made in order to guard the North-West Frontier of British India had been expended altogether in vain.

The British Government had just succeeded in opening negotiations with Abdul-Rahmán-Khán, the powerful Barakzai Sirdár, and had experienced relief at the prospect of the gradual evacuation of Afghánistán, when an unexpected catastrophe in the southern theatre of the war upset all the calculations of the English, and placed them in a very difficult position.

The political results of any reverse to the British arms.

Once more the English came to be convinced that the war contrived by Lord Beaconsfield with the Amir of Afghánistán might be classed amongst the number of the most ruinous political errors. Once again it had been brought home to them that their military power in Southern Asia was not distinguished for any special durable character, and that the destruction of even one weak brigade would not only put a strain on the whole of their Indian army, but would necessitate the immediate despatch of more troops from England. We would invite the most serious attention of politicians and of military men to the position of the English in Afghánistán in the middle of 1880. They had waged war with a portion of the Afghán people, who were at the time without any properly organised Government and without any regular army, and yet the English had suffered failure after failure, had had to put forth all their exertions in a struggle with a people whom they had proudly regarded as a cipher. When we view the struggle between the *powerful* Indian empire with the impoverished and numerically weak but brave Afghán people, we are convinced that in its final results success gradually inclined to the side of the Afgháns. A large Anglo-Indian army marched into Afghánistán, and led by trained officers, including many very talented Generals, could not conquer a portion of the weak sovereignty adjacent to them, even though it was in a condition of anarchy. Of course such a condition of affairs must have had deep causes, and that it was beyond the power of the English to do all that they desired.

The English have already begun to taste the fruits of their own intrigues directed against Russia. Afghánistán, when invited by the Indian Government to increased military activity, consented, but directed her troops not against the Russians but against the English themselves. In its desire to facilitate the solution on its own behalf of the great Eastern Question by creating for Russia great complications in Central Asia, the Conservative Ministry of Great Britain has raised up difficulties for itself. It has thus had to reduce a skilfully-fortified Afghánistán.

Afghán strength directed not against Russia but against England herself.

Thus we have seen that Afghánistán, about the stability of which the English Government bragged so, and in which it saw only a powerful State, friendly to the English and destined to become India's bulwark on the north-west, proved to be but a reed after all.

Afghánistán a broken reed against Russian aggression.

The English had to display unusual exertions and to make great sacrifices, so that under grievous circumstances they might save their position in Southern Asia. Of the retention of any portion of Afghánistán there could no longer even be mention. All was now centred in their being able with all possible celerity and with some appearance of honour to clear out of the country and again resume their position in India.

Result of the war in Afghánistán was an evacuation of all parts of the country.

According to most extreme deliberation it would be the greatest political wisdom on the part of the English not to engulph themselves in the direction of Herát, and especially towards the Amu-Daria. Their attention should be directed to the introduction of peace in their rich Indian possessions and the consolidation of English power therein. The danger to their rule threatens not from the north-west, but is shaped in India itself, and is engendered by the too risky course of action of the Conservative Government.

Peace essential to the best interests of India.

33.—Russian view of the Conservative policy regarding Afghánistán summed up in a chapter headed "Afghánistán as the neighbour of British India."

On the termination of the Anglo-Afghán War of 1878-79, the Viceroy of India and the Secretary of State for India exchanged long despatches. The latter, in his despatch, explained that the Gandamak Treaty of Peace, which had been signed by Yakúb-Khán, the new Amir of Afghánistán, and ratified by the Viceroy at Simla on the 18th (30th) May, was to be considered the final solution of the question as to the north-west frontier of India.

Our readers will doubtless remember the almost unbridled joy which

English society and Press displayed on the subject of the termination of the Afghán complication. This is intelligible, because the military operations dragged on and the objects of the struggle were not clearly explained to the public; these objects were in fact kept secret by the Conservative Ministry and the Viceroy of India.

The small circle of persons living in London, who consider it their duty to take every opportunity of frightening society by pointing to idle visions of a possible Russian invasion of India, entered into close alliance with Lords Beaconsfield and Salisbury, and being encouraged by the cowardly policy of the Indian Government, which saw Russian intrigues in everything, declared its dissatisfaction at the incompleteness of the Treaty of Gandamak.

One of the leaders of this circle, Sir Henry Rawlinson, after the text of the treaty had been published, inserted in the *Nineteenth Century* an article entitled "The result of the Afghán War."

[Here General Soboleff makes an extract from the article in question.]

The deep conviction in the actual force of the Treaty of Gandamak had for its result the hasty reduction of the Indian Army of Operation and the leaving small detachments in the Khaibar Pass and in the Kurám, Kandahar, and Pishin Valleys.

The Viceroy of India imagined that Afghánistán had become sufficiently convinced of the insurmountable force of the British arms and had now only to experience the power of British policy. Major Cavagnari was accordingly sent to Kábul, and his instructions were to bring Yakúb-Khán and all the provinces of his State into subjection to the English Government. The attempt was not successful. Considering themselves still sufficiently strong, the Afgháns dealt with the foreign Mission in their own way, and then the Gandamak Treaty of Peace practically ceased to exist, so that the English had to begin a new war.

Although the massacre of the members of the English Mission was prompted solely by the hatred which the Afgháns have for the English, still the Conservative Ministry could not free itself from the nightmare which everywhere and at all times followed it, and so it never ceased to give expression to the dread of exterior interference in the affairs of Afghánistán.

[Here General Sobeleff gives short extracts from speeches made by Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Cross, Lord Salisbury, Lord Beaconsfield, Mr. Stanhope, Mr. Bourke, Lord Lytton, Mr. Smith, and also from the Queen's Speech at the opening of Parliament on the 24th January (5th February) 1880.]

In these declarations of the Conservative Ministry of Great Britain are expressed two main political principles:—

(1) The necessity for strengthening the north-western frontier of India, in view of a possible Russian invasion.

(2) The incompatibility of English interests in Southern and Central Asia *with the existence of a united Afghánistán.*

The second principle is the outcome of the first, as the late English Ministry saw in a united Afghánistán an enemy to its interests in India and a friend of Russia.

We will not dwell for long on the illustration of the first and most real principle. We will first of all observe that the insupportable terror of a Russian invasion of India is the creation of the English themselves. This terror is not at all comprehensible to us, at least not under existing circumstances.

The fear of losing in the far off future their Indian possessions has compelled the English to interfere in the affairs of an independent and peaceable neighbour. By embarking in a useless and expensive war, they committed the greatest political injustice, the victims of which were Shir-Ali and Yakúb-Khán, and they thereby made of the brave Afghán nation their bitterest enemy. By desiring to acquire political supremacy in Afghánistán, the English chose for the attainment of this object roads that would lead in a perfectly opposite direction. In soaring after the obscure purpose of guarding the frontiers of their own rich India, the English demanded from the ruler of Afghánistán, under a threat of depriving him of his possessions and of banishment to India, that he should absolutely ignore his powerful neighbour—the Russian Empire—as though such a state of affairs could be thought of between two neighbouring independent States. Why Afghánistán has not yet been conquered by the English, their foot has not yet been planted on the greater portion of this sovereignty, whilst the Afghán nation, in spite of all the utterly useless misfortunes brought upon it, has heroically fought with its enemy and has never considered itself beaten even in those parts of its territory where strong bodies of the Indian army have been quartered for a considerable time. The Afgháns consider themselves an independent people, but the English, oddly enough, do not wish to allow the Afghán Government all the rights of an independent Government. The unintelligible demands of the English made to the ruler of Afghánistán place them in the most ridiculous position, for they are striving to create a situation, of which no example can be traced in history. What would be said in Europe if, for example, Germany demanded of the Belgian or Dutch Government that they should completely ignore the existence of the French Republic?

The demands made upon the Afgháns have not been carried out, and the English have not the power to see that they are carried out. They have themselves shewn the Afgháns where they can seek protection. It would seem as though they did not wish to know that any sort of well-organised State, striving to preserve its own integrity, can establish peaceful relations with adjoining States, and that if one State becomes

its enemy it would naturally seek to become more closely allied with another neighbour. During the reign of the late Shir-Ali, Afghánistán preserved perfectly peaceful relations with both England and Russia. Before the Russo-Turkish war, England presented such demands to the late Amir that, from a feeling of mere self-preservation, he could not carry them out, and he was right. England rested her claim upon the right of might, Shir-Ali his on the fundamental principles of international equity. The principle of defending the north-western frontier of India from danger is one that has not yet been explained even by the English themselves, and was of course not understood by the Amir, more especially as between India and Russian-Turkistán there stretches a belt of territory, more than 670 miles wide, across which runs one of the most colossal of the mountain ridges of the Hindu-Kush. Under such circumstances, Shir-Ali could not be brought to see that his State was threatened by any danger from the side of Russia. On the other hand, through the meddling of the English Government, he saw an immediate threatening of his independence. Between England and Afghánistán there arose, therefore, a serious misunderstanding, whereupon the English took offence and invaded the country adjacent to their own territory.

When it became evident that Shir-Ali's sovereignty presented the appearance of a well-organised State, of course relatively speaking, and when his troops were on the road to becoming an organised and fairly powerful body of men, the English Government decided that for the safety of India it would be much more advantageous to have as a neighbour a group of several Afghán provinces quite independent, the one of the other, rather than one united Afghánistán. With this idea, after the occupation of Kábul in October 1879, General Roberts, armed with the documents which he found in that city, shewed, as clearly as twice two are four, that the late Shir-Ali, in organising an army, had in view ambitious notions directed against the peace of British India, and that, with this intent, he had formed a friendship with dangerous Russia and had come to an understanding with the semi-independent Native States.

[Here follows an extract from a report of General Roberts on this subject.]

It is very likely that this report is exaggerated, but it sufficed to show the fact of the development of the military power of the Afgháns, and also the fact of the Amir's inclination to stand on a friendly footing with his northern neighbour, and so all the harm and danger arising out of a united Afghánistán might be perceived. This demonstration was considered a sufficiently exciting cause for completely reversing the policy which Great Britain had followed for the space of 50 years. *Firstly*, it was held to be imperative to support the development and strength of the Afghán sovereignty, and afterwards it was thought to be as necessary to disintegrate it into a number of weak provinces.

We will not dwell further on a detailed exposition of this important question, for to do so would carry us away too far: we will, therefore, proceed straight to the project for the disintegration of Afghánistán, as explained in the *Civil and Military Gazette* in February 1880—

I. Herát and Afghánistán to constitute a Persian province.

II. Southern Afghánistán (capital at Kandahar) to be a vassal State under the protection of Great Britain.

III. Eastern Afghánistán (capital at Kábul) including Bámián, also to be under the protection of Great Britain.

IV. Portions of Afghánistán might possibly be made over to Khelát and Káshmir.

V. India to retain the Kuram and Khost Valleys and the Kábul Valley as far as Jalálábád inclusive.

It was further explained that in the two vassal States, Southern and Eastern Afghánistán, regiments of Hazáras, Kizil-Báshis, and others were to be quartered under English observation. The programme concluded with an expression of the wish that the English Government would convert Marv into a separate State, under the joint guarantee of England and of Persia.

Afghán-Turkistán was altogether omitted from the project, and we observe that when the northern portions of Afghánistán had passed into the hands of Abdul-Rahmán, the English Government, not knowing at what this Sirdár was aiming, was ready to be content with the fact that this portion should be formed into a separate State.

This political programme pointed to two main principles: the disintegration of Afghánistán and the creation in Southern Asia of a combination of States directed against Russian interests. At the head of this combination was to stand Great Britain, behind her Persia, and between both Marv, Eastern and Southern Afghánistán, Biluchistán, and Káshmir. Further information tells us of the desire, on the part of England, to direct the administration and troops at Marv and Herát through the direct instrumentality of British officers.

This plan, remarkable for its grandiose character, formed a part of the general programme of the late Conservative Ministry of Great Britain, having for its object the protection of India from invasion, the taking possession of all the sovereignties of Southern Asia, beginning with Asiatic Turkey, and ending with those adjacent to the borders of British India, and the creation of a row of strongly fortified points.

As far back as 1876, when events were threatening Russian interests in the Balkán peninsula, the War Department of Great Britain had prepared a plan of a campaign against Russia. According to this plan, it was proposed to send from England to Trebizond an army corps of a strength of 30,000 men. It was at the same time arranged that a force of 15,000 English and 45,000 Native troops should be despatched from

India, to take part in a campaign directed through Mesopotamia on Erzeroum. The Turkish forces in Armenia, numbering 100,000 regulars and 95,000 Kurds, were to be placed under English officers. It was proposed to divide this force of 285,000 men into two armies—that of the Erzeroum and of Kars. At this time also, the English Government had proposed to Shir-Ali, Amir of Afghánistán, to enter into an offensive and defensive alliance. The secret Mission, under Sir Lewis Pelly, had for its chief object the conclusion of this alliance. It was really very fortunate for Great Britain that she should attain this object somehow or another, for, in the perfectly undefined state of the relations between Afghánistán and India, she could not, without risk, weaken the Anglo-Indian Army by sending from it 60,000 men to Turkey. As we know, the Pelly Mission got nothing out of the Amir; in fact, it was the cause of his arming himself against England, because it shewed him the very clear intention on the part of the Indian Government to break through the principles attaching to the independence of his State. Moreover, Shir-Ali was not at all disposed to risk a war with Russia to please England. History will doubtless explain what amount of influence Shir-Ali exercised on Great Britain's determination to take an active part in the Russo-Turkish war, but we cannot refrain from holding the belief that the firmness of the Afghán Amir could not but have been the cause of the English Government putting to itself the question: Would it not be dangerous to weaken the Anglo-Indian Army, especially in regard to the problem of the defence of the North-West Frontier?

We would direct the especial attention of our readers to the above-described plan of war operations between England and Russia, since no one can say but what, in five or six years' time, Great Britain may again be under the rule of a Conservative Ministry,* and that schemes, now almost forgotten, may not again be classed in the category of political dreams to be again brought forward, and it may be developed under more favourable conditions. We must always remember that the English nation has peculiar interests in the Far East, interests which are pursued with persistency and on a system almost apart from the question whether this or that party is at the head of affairs. We see that with regard to Afghánistán, the Liberal Government is just now following the same policy as was inaugurated by its predecessors in office, and that the political programme has been changed only so far as is necessitated by the energy of the Afgháns and the state of the Anglo-Indian Army through the want of knowledge as to how the ranks of the several races can be filled. The projected disintegration of Afghánistán, in the manner indicated by the Anglo-Indian newspapers, was not thought to be practicable for the following principal reasons: (1) in the negotiations with the Persian Government respecting Herát, political considerations were

* This forecast has proved correct,—W. E. G.

put forward, the force of which could not be recognised by the English Government; (2) Afghánistán did not consider itself conquered, for the Afgháns were ready to renew the struggle, and that too on a more serious scale; there was no hope, therefore, that the question would be speedily terminated, especially with the resources at the command of the Indian Government. The affairs of the English in India had taken a very bad turn, for the muffled dissatisfaction of the native population was ready to burst into open rebellion. (4) Abdul-Rahmán, who had appeared in the upper valley of the Amu-Daria, had established solid relation, with the influential men of Kohistán, Kábul, and Ghazni, and was ready, under certain conditions, to assume the leadership of the Afgháns and to continue the struggle with the invaders of the country.

Under the force of these circumstances, the English were compelled to narrow their ambitious plans, to abandon the idea of a joint occupation of the Herát province with Persia, and of making a vassal State of Afghánistán. They acted very sensibly in cementing relations with Abdul-Rahmán and in offering him the position of Amir, but they made a very great mistake in separating the province of Kandahar from Afghánistán and in proclaiming the Sirdár Shir-Ali *Wali* or Sovereign of it. By this act the English Government severed the connection between the provinces of Herát and Kábul, offended the national feelings of a powerful party which desired the restoration of its country intact, and hastened a catastrophe in Southern Afghánistán.

After what had taken place in the theatre of Afghán operations, the English Government could no longer think of carrying out that part of the programme which concerned Marv.

In the summer of 1880, it became evident to the English that they could not deal with the Afghán complication, and that the most brilliant termination of all this sorry affair would be the evacuation of the country with some *appearance* of victory. This could be the only possible result, and one that it was extremely necessary for England to adopt, for otherwise she would risk the loss of her prestige in India.

Further on we shall see what the final result of the Anglo-Afghán struggle was. It seems to us that one of the chief results of this quarrel is the bitter hatred of the Afgháns towards the English; this hatred, coupled with the natural pride of the Afgháns and also their conviction that, generally speaking, the English were not successful, will long prevent the English being able to count on Afghánistán as a possible ally of the Indian Empire.

34.—Examination of the Conservative policy of breaking up Afghánistán into a number of States each independent of the other, but all under a British protectorate.

General Stolaitoff's appearance at Kábul in the summer of 1878 and

his reception there with the complete attention and respect befitting the envoy of such a dreaded Power as Russia, produced, as we know, both in England and in India alarm bordering on panic. The English were at last persuaded that they had made the greatest political mistake in trying to organise the armed forces of Afghánistán, and that English arms and money had not been used in the way in which they had designed. Our readers may be convinced of the justice of these remarks by looking attentively at the text of the telegraphic despatch to the Viceroy of India from Lord Cranbrooke, Secretary of State for India, dated 6th (18th) November 1878, inserted in a special supplement of the present work.

Short extracts from this document were inserted also in the *Notes on the Anglo-Afghán War of 1878-79*, which appeared in the *Russki Invalid*.

The English had now to destroy the work of their own hands. They firmly resolved to attain their object and to get quit, once for all, of the nightmares which had been throttling them—a *united* Afghánistán and Russian influence paramount therein.

In one of the speeches delivered in 1880 by Lord Lytton, the Viceroy of India, the two principal objects which led to the Anglo-Afghán war of 1878-79 were very clearly defined.

[Here General Soboleff quotes the purport of Lord Lytton's speech in question.]

Having arrested the Amir Yakúb-Khán and banished him to India, the English could not long delay the choice of a person for the post of Amir, who would give the requisite guarantees and consent to the breaking up of his country into several independent States. Pending the solution of this question of primary importance, the Viceroy, with the consent of the Home Government, decided upon the commencement of the breaking up of the Afghán monarchy by creating a separate sovereignty in Southern Afghánistán, which should be quite independent of the Amir of Kábul, and the capital of which should be at Kandahar.

Sirdar Shir-Ali-Khán, the Governor of Kandahar, was nominated as the future ruler of this new State.

General Roberts, to whom had been entrusted the task of breaking the military power of the Afgháns, reported to the Indian Government that he had received at Kábul the most authentic information to the effect that the late Amir, Shir-Ali-Khán, had laboured unceasingly to make Afghánistán a powerful State. He had learnt that the Amir had obtained 379 pieces of ordnance, of which 34 were siege guns and 245 field pieces; that of those of smaller calibre 150 were mountain guns; that he had 50,000 small-bore arms, and that of these 12,000 were of English manufacture. The English Ministry and the Viceroy of India considered that, if Afghánistán were to become a perfectly independent State, her sympathy might finally become diverted to the side of powerful Russia, and that then a terrible danger would threaten English dominion in India.

The English assert that the late Shir-Ali-Khán had an *ambitious*

plan, for he intended to carry a rampart wall right round the Bemáru heights and to erect a citadel on those heights. He had in fact already laid the foundations of the projected citadel. In like manner he had already begun to build on the southern slopes of the same heights a new palace for himself. The *Times* correspondent, telegraphing from Kábul on the 14th (26th) December, said that Shir-Ali had begun to lay out the Sherpur fortified camp in view of an unavoidable conflict with either England or Russia. The anticipated struggle was also the motive for Shir-Ali's increased activity in the manufacture of guns and of breech-loaders. In 1878, before the English declared war against him, Shir-Ali had 328 pieces of ordnance, of which 34 were siege guns, 144 being field and 150 mountain. He had also 50,000 small-bore rifles, and of these 12,000 were either of English manufacture or were skilful imitations thereof. After the December events at Kábul, during which a powerful Anglo-Indian force, under the command of General Roberts, had been exposed to the fierce attack of Afghán levies and had almost been destroyed, the English Government at last recognised the necessity of parcelling out Afghánistán into several States, independent the one of the other, but all under the control of the Indian Government.

The Conservative Ministry of Great Britain, which had attached too much importance to the Central Asian question, had not been able to subject the late Amir Shir-Ali-Khán, or to obtain from him the services of the armed forces of Afghánistán for purposes that were hostile to Russia.

With the younger generation the English have effected nothing more. Yakúb-Khán seemed to them an unfit personage, for he was a strong ruler, and, like his father, the late Shir-Ali-Khán, had opened a correspondence with the Russian authorities in Turkistán. They then arrested him in the most unceremonious manner, deprived him of his throne, and finally banished him to India, then held that a powerfully-armed Afghánistán threatened the exclusive interests of England, and that the time had at length arrived for breaking off all the connection with this warlike Asiatic State.

Lord Lytton did not wish to wait for the arrival of the Marquis of Ripon, the new Viceroy.* Matters were hastened, so that the new Government of India might be bound hand and foot.

Lord Lytton's Government used every endeavour to justify this hasty decision, by pointing to its imperative necessity. It even went so far as to assert that the local population nourished some peculiar feeling towards the English. We consider it apposite to here adduce certain expressions of opinion by one of the eye-witnesses of the whole affair communicated in a letter from Kandahar.

[Here follows a lengthy extract.]

* The Marquis of Ripon left London on the 1st (13th) May.—*Author.*

35.—Elements which enter into Russia's calculations in the shaping of her policy in Central Asia and in the direction of India.

Should we be surprised at the fate which overtook the unfortunate Yakúb-Khán? In no wise! As regards Asia, the English Government acts with strict adherence to the rule that it is necessary for Englishmen to obtain as many material advantages as possible. What they did in the time of their first conquests in India, they are doing now. There we witness the same untruthfulness and the same egotism. During the last 25 years an unaccountable terror has taken possession of the English. * * * The presence of Russian troops in the valley of the Amu-Daria does not give a moment's peace to the Indian Government. The officers and officials of India are free from this dread only when, as is usual with them in the hot climate in which they live, they are under the influence of wine and other strong drinks. . . . A new idea has now taken possession of Anglo-Indians, *viz.*, not to allow themselves to reflect on all the horrors of their position in Asia. This sentiment is not in every case capable of supplanting that policy in India which the British Government has followed and continues to follow.

Every one knows that but a small portion of the surface of India has been acquired by the English in open war. The greater part has been annexed by means of various indecent political acts. We call to mind, for example, the history of the confiscation of the Wadha State. The Rajah of Wadha entrusted to the English the defence of his possessions from his enemies on all sides, and for this purpose he placed at their disposal his troops and his resources. On receipt of these, the English determined upon annexing the State to their own dominions. The Rajah trembled before them, and for every kind word he thanked them on his knees. The Indian Government then resolved to take the fullest advantage of the misplaced confidence of the Rajah, but fearing the influence of his son, who was a capable man and acquainted with their manner of procedure, they invited the Rajah and his family to Calcutta, where they announced that the Rajah was to be deposed. Wadha was thus annexed to British India, and the Rajah's treasury was thrown into the English State coffers: the crownless potentate was then arrested and awarded a trifling pension. In order to clear itself before the world, the English Government recalled Lord Dalhousie and appointed a new Viceroy in his place, but it did not restore the Wadha State.

As is known, Shir-Ali was accused of not wishing to have an English Envoy at Kábul, but the late Amir well knew what the presence of such a person signified. He was aware that the presence of Envoys, Residents, or other Political Agents leads to the overthrow of the Native Government and the ultimate incorporation of the country in the Anglo-Indian dominions. He knew of the numerous examples of the most terrible crimes committed by these Agents in seeking the advantage of

their own Government. He was well aware how insolently Residents behave to the Rajahs to whom they are accredited, and how well they understand how to arrange matters so that the particular Rajah should die *from inflammation of the bowels*, whilst the English doctor, who is called in to pronounce upon the cause of death, usually adds "*this Rajah was a great glutton.*" After the glutton is dead, however, his State is annexed to the English possessions, or is temporarily placed in charge of a Resident who is appointed guardian, with full powers, over the infant son of the deceased Rajah.* The political tricks of the English, which are so systematically practised in India, are but little known in Europe, where people are taken up with more serious matters. But India and the Asiatic States adjoining well know how the illustrious power of the English is upheld. In Southern Asia they are not liked, so that the approach of that other strong Power, which is more moral and honest, is anxiously awaited.

We deem it necessary to here remark that many parts of India had already begun to be disturbed, and the Viceroy's Government followed with alarm the development of a hostile spirit and in places evidence of open opposition.

Russian Akhál-Tekke Expedition of 1879, and its effect on Native opinion in India.

Moreover, the march of a Russian detachment from Chikishliar to the Akhál-Tekke *oasis* was followed with misgiving, because it was feared that a Russian movement towards Marv was intended, and as Marv was held to be the key of Herát, so Herát was recognised as the key of India. Hence the increase of Russian prestige in Asia was apprehended, prestige that is actual and powerful, and which rests on its own incomparable and durable foundations. The *Standard*, a paper with a wide circulation in England, and which is an organ of the Conservative Ministry, has declared that one day's delay could lead to fatal complication in Central Asian affairs.

The English gave their serious attention to the suspicious journeying throughout India of small parties of Mussulmáns, and they were prone to see in these journeys symptoms of a revolutionary movement.

[General Soboleff here quotes the *Standard* of the 13th (25th) December in support of a statement that bodies of Afgháns and Arabs were roaming through India, with the object of stirring up a rebellion against the English, the centre of the propaganda being Haidarábád in the Deccan.]

The alarm had sounded throughout India. The English very well understood *that a spark alone would suffice to kindle the inflammable mate-*

* Not long ago, thanks to a London correspondent, the fate of the semi-independent State of Mysore was made known. The Rajah of Mysore, being then a minor, the reins of power were in the hands of the English. In course of time this State, which had been a thriving one, began to become considerably poorer. During the space of three years there died of starvation *one million souls*, out of a population of five millions. Of the property of the deceased Rajah, which in 1868 had been valued by Lieutenant Colonel Elliot, one-half of the diamonds and other valuables had disappeared, no one knew where.—*Author.*

rial which was heaped up all over the country in abundance. The Indian Government is well aware of the poverty of the population of India, and that the taxation has reached its utmost limit; indeed, it is principally from this cause that there is a widespread though hidden dissatisfaction throughout the country. In a private letter from India published in London, the following passage occurs: "The Mussulmán population of Upper India does not attempt even to conceal its joy on the occasion of our Kábul misfortunes.* The country has been denuded of troops, and I should not be surprised if the discontent of the people caused by a series of bad harvests led to actions that would not admit of a doubt as to their true meaning." In another letter, also from India, the writer remarks that "if we wish to retain India we must make it a rule to be moderate in imposing taxes, especially *if we will get mixed up in enterprises beyond our Indian frontier.*"

The last words contain a deep truth which unfortunately the Conservative Ministry of Great Britain does not wish to recognise. We consider that the last Afghán war gave fresh and abundant food for elements that might be hostile to the English. These elements have, until recently, been concealed, but the Conservative Ministry, with all its optimism, cannot guarantee that they shall not display a great vitality. We would invite the attention of our readers to the Vassadeo episode, which created not a little sensation in England, and was one of the logical results of an aggressive policy on the part of an English Conservative Ministry. Vassadeo, after completing a brilliant course in an English school, received the post of writer in one of the Financial Departments of India. As a native and therefore a man of an inferior race, he met with the usual humiliating demeanour from the English, and for a time concealed his hatred towards those he was serving. But when he had collected a small band of men of the same way of thinking, he decided to begin the struggle. The *task before him was the carrying out of a vast but patriotic programme*, viz., *freeing his native land from the hated yoke of aliens.*

His plan did not succeed, for he was arrested by the English before he had been able to get together even 100 sympathisers. The interesting side of this affair consisted in the fact that the people did all they could to hide him from the searching of the police, and when at length he was caught, crowds hailed him as a patriot and as a martyr for the popular cause.

In parts of India dull murmuring turned into open war. Our readers doubtless know all about the Assam complications, which ended in a war that required a considerable Anglo-Indian force to bring it to a conclusion. This war did not attract general attention, but only because the Afghán campaign swallowed up all the interest of the general public.

* The massacre of Cavagnari and of the other members of the Mission.—*Author.*

We have not now in view an exposition of even the general outline of the state of affairs in India. This question passes beyond the limits of our present task; still it must necessarily invite the attention of those persons in our society who have every opportunity of studying it. We would, however, here mention that judging by the English papers and by certain special publications, the position of the English in India prior to the beginning of the war of 1878 was fairly good. Although the poverty of the population had increased, there was hope that with the cessation of bad harvests and the *peaceful* development of this vast and rich possession of the English an equilibrium in the finances of the country would be restored.

The importance of the Sherpur catastrophe was intensified by certain apparently altogether lateral circumstances. Thus, some days before Muhammad-Ján's decisive victories, which ushered in the siege of Sherpur, *viz.*, on the evening of the 29th November (11th December) a native lay in wait for the Viceroy, Lord Lytton, as he was driving in Calcutta and attempted to take his life by firing at him with a revolver.

News of the attempt soon spread, and the intended murderer was pronounced to be an hereditary maniac as well as a drunkard. In spite of this official assurance, the event produced a certain amount of impression throughout India.

Turkish intrigues against England.

England was evidently not in good luck. On all sides the most serious complications made their appearance. Their best friend, on whose behalf they waged the ruinous Crimean war, for whom they so zealously laboured during the years 1877-78, but for whom would scarcely have reached her position on the map of Asia, this friend began to systematically plot against her. In the beginning of August 1880, positive information reached the London newspapers that there were being despatched from Constantinople to India a large number of printed leaflets, the designed object of which was to incite the Indian Mussulmáns against the British rule, and that the British Government had turned its attention to the circumstance, because there were indications that the said leaflets were being circulated with the knowledge of the Porte. The Turkish press gave expression at this time to the most unfriendly opinions regarding the English. According to statements made in the Turkish newspapers the people of India were seriously excited against the English.

The commencement of a Mussulmán propaganda in India, in which the Sultán took part, was a demonstration in the highest degree dangerous for the English. Of course the attempts made were fitful and very uncertain, but they were nevertheless dangerous in that—*1stly*, the Turks had now become active workers in India, so that no one could foretell what would come of this in the future; and *2ndly*, and what was more

important still, the seed of this propaganda fell on soil prepared for it. According to the assurances of persons who made a study of the situation in India, every time an educated Native found it possible* to speak freely he invariably gave expression to very much that was unfavourable to the English.

[General Soboleff now proceeds to quote at length from an article entitled "Picture of English Administration" sent to one of the London newspapers by a native of Bombay. The name of the paper is not mentioned, but in all probability it is the *Statesman*.]

Disloyalty in Bombay.

Such is the picture of the position of the English in India as drawn by a person well acquainted with the subject. This position was not unknown to the Sultán of Turkey, and so he resolved to make an attempt to interfere in the affairs of India. The English comprehended the danger that threatened their power in Southern Asia, and with the greatest energy hastened to efface the defeat inflicted on them by Ayúb-Khán in Southern Afghánistán.

Apart from the circumstances above set forth, England is at this time experiencing considerable difficulty in the settlement of the Irish question. The Irish, like the natives of India, are impoverished to the last degree by English rule, and are ready to show their rulers that their popular interests are above those of rich English landholders. The Irish complication did much to hinder the settlement of the Afghán question, since the English could not despatch to India any considerable force for the reinforcement of their Indian Army, for they were obliged to keep in Ireland large bodies of troops. Moreover, they were experiencing difficulty in completing the strength of both the English and Indian armies.

The element of Irish disaffection is not lost sight of by men of the school in Russia to which General Soboleff belongs.

The Maiwand catastrophe has, moreover, thrown a doubt on the defensive capabilities of this army, and has at least shewn that those qualities are not of a very solid kind. We have seen that the overthrow of one brigade upset all the calculations of the Indian Government, which demanded instant reinforcements from England. We have seen, too, that the same disaster had an unfavourable effect on the quiet in rear, and that if at the same time India had been subjected to serious commotion, it would only have been because the weak ruler of Herát was the vanquisher of the English, and because the Indian population could expect no mercy at the hands of the conqueror of their rulers. We will permit ourselves to express the very possible supposition that if in place of Ayúb-Khán there had been at Maiwand a

The Russians count in their aggressions towards Afghánistán and India on aid in the form of an insurrection in India.

* See letter by the talented M—f f in No. 1645 of the *Novoye Vremya*, dated London 20th September (2nd October) 1880.—*Author.*

Russian General, and that the English had been routed, not by Afgháns but by Russians, then the defensive strength of the Anglo-Indian army would, in the presence of an external enemy, have been broken. There cannot, in fact, be a doubt but that in such a case a terrible rebellion would have broken out in India of which the inhabitants cherish the unexplained yet secret hope of their inevitable release by the Russians from the English yoke. To put down such a rebellion the English would have to bring their entire army into operation.*

* Whilst the condensed English edition of this work has been passing through the Press, General Soboleff has published three more parts or issues in conclusion of his voluminous review of the most recent Anglo-Afghán war and of Russian policy generally in the direction of India. From notices which have appeared in the Russian newspapers it is evident that the subject of these additional parts or issues treats of by no means the least important or interesting portion of the entire work.—W. E. G.

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* The working out by the Russians of these Routes is surely an indication of the importance which they attach to the Turkistan approaches to India as distinct from those on the Trans-Caspian side.

W. E. G.



APPENDICES.

I.—Route from the town of Mazár-i-Sharif, in Afghán-Turkistán, to the town of Kábul.

1. *Fort Gurimár, 16 versts (10⅔ miles).*—From Mazár-i-Sharif the road at first crosses a cultivated tract, but at the 8th *verst* (5⅓ miles) a steppe begins which is covered with rough stones. On the right there stretch rocky bluffs, and these gradually approach the road, which is a good wheel-track.

2. *Naib-ábád (village), 21 versts (14 miles).*—From Gurimár the road throughout is fit for wheeled transport and runs over stony ground. To the right extend rocky hills. A mountain spring, which supplies the village of Naib-ábád with water, is distant 1 *verst* (⅔ mile) from the village. The water of this spring has a sulphureous taste, and, therefore, before using it, it is necessary to boil it. There is no fuel along this road.

3. *Tásh-Kurgán (town), 25 versts (16⅔ miles).*—From Naib-ábád the road is fit for wheels throughout; it traverses a soft soil, and it is only at the entrance to the town of Tásh-Kurgán that the surface becomes stony. The rocky hills, which skirt the road on the right, approach quite close to the outskirts of the town.

The citadel of Tásh-Kurgán (Khulm) stands on a large hillock at the entrance to the Khulm gorge. The gardens and buildings of Tásh-Kurgán are scattered over a considerable area.

4. *Sayad (village), 15 versts (10 miles).*—From Tásh-Kurgán the road turns sharply to the south, passing at first through the narrow defile formed by the Khulm river, which is crossed and recrossed several times. The road then enters a wide depression in which the hamlet of Sayad is situated. Up to the 7th *verst* (3⅔ miles) the track is very stony, but when a hamlet, which is 9 *versts* (6 miles) from Tásh-Kurgán, is reached, the stones disappear. Soon afterwards, however, the road again becomes stony and continues to be so right up to Sayad. The track along this route is practicable for wheeled transport.

5. *Bád-i-Siyáb (village). 26 versts (17⅓ miles).*—After leaving the village of Sayad, the road passes out of the depression, and having wound round a crag, it comes out on to the left bank of the Khulm river. Further on the gorge formed by this river opens out, and then the track leaves the bed of the stream. At the 11th *verst* (7⅓ miles) the road passes the ploughed fields of the village of Gaznikák and crosses several water-courses (*ariks*) which supply the valley. The village of Gaznikák stands to the left of the road opposite the 6th *verst* (4th mile). At the 11th *verst* (7⅓rd mile) the track ascends to a plateau and then

traverses a slightly undulating locality. At the 13th *verst* (8⅔rd mile) a road branches off to the village of Hazrat-Sultán.

The right of the road is marked by a river bed which is filled with water only during the melting of the snows in the neighbouring mountains.

This channel crosses the road in two places. Further on, the track gradually rises to a hill, and at the 18th *verst* (12th mile) reaches the crest of a pass. A long and steep descent from this pass brings the road again into the valley of the Khulm. Under the cover of the hills to the left of the road is seen the village of Hazrat-Sultán in the midst of gardens. The valley near the road is highly cultivated. At the 20th *verst* (13⅓rd mile) a water-course diverted from the Khulm river approaches the left of the road and runs parallel to it up to Bád-i-Siyáb. The water-course is crossed just as this village is entered.

The track throughout this march is fit for wheeled transport. Stony ground is only met with about the village of Sayad, and from the 13th *verst* (8⅔rd mile), (where the roads branch), up to the descent from the pass spoken of.

6. *Haibak* (*village*), *25 versts* (*16⅔ miles*).—From Bád-i-Siyáb the road crosses by a ford to the right bank of the Khulm river and passes through its valley. At 3 *versts* (2 miles) it rises to a slight eminence. To the left of the road, at the 5th *verst* (3⅓rd mile) a mill has been put up across a water-course and a grove of trees has been planted at this spot. To the right of the road and at the 6th *verst* (4th mile) there is a scattered hamlet surrounded by gardens. At the 9th *verst* (6th mile) the road crosses a water-course, and at the 12th *verst* (8th mile) it goes as far as a dried-up water-course, and then, turning eastwards, comes out on to the high road between Hazrat-Sultán and Haibak. Further on, the track, after crossing a low ridge, comes out on to the outskirts of a large village, the gardens of which extend along a valley right up to Haibak. At the 18th and 19th *versts* (12th and 12⅔rd miles) water-courses are crossed by wooden bridges, and at the 21st *verst* (14th mile) there is a stone bridge over the Khulm. Beyond this begin the gardens of Haibak. The fort of Haibak stands on a detached and precipitous hill, whence the country round can be seen for a great distance. After passing round the base of this hill, the road crosses, by a bridge, a deep ravine filled with water.

At the foot of the hill there is a grove of large plane trees (*chinárs*). This spot is well adapted for a camping ground.

From Bád-i-Siyáb up to the 12th *verst* (8th mile) the road is unfit for wheeled-transport, but further on, although it is very stony, carts can move along it.

The Haibak valley is wide, very much cultivated, and thickly populated. If a halt be made at the village of Hazrat-Sultán, then a direct road from it to Haibak would be found more convenient.

7. *Sir-Bágh* (*village*), *30 versts* (*20 miles*).—At Haibak the road crosses over to the right bank of the Khulm river, and, after making a bend eastwards, skirts the village of Akam, which it approaches from the north. Further on, after passing through this village, the road at the 5th *verst* (3⅓rd mile) takes a sharp bend towards the south and crosses by a stone bridge to the right bank of the Khulm. The onward track lies through an extremely hilly country. From time to time cornices, hanging high above the river, have to be passed over. At the 6th *verst* (4th mile) and to the right of the road lies the village of Nezu. At the 7th *verst* (4⅔rd mile) the road passes through that village, and then comes out on to an undulating country by a narrow path-way. At the 12th *verst* (8th mile) the Khulm river is crossed by a stone bridge. At the 23rd *verst* (15⅓rd mile) is the village of Kunda in the midst of gardens.

At the 26th *verst* (17⅓rd mile) the gardens of the village of Sir-Bágh begin. These cover the valley for a distance of 5 *versts* (3⅓ miles).

At the 27th *verst* (18th mile) the road passes over a high rocky spur and then enters Sir-Bágh.

The road from Haibak passes through the narrow gorge cut by the Khulm river, which is overhung by lofty crags, and over these the track leads. In places the gorge is not more than 50 paces wide. The road is strewn over with stones and pieces of rock and consequently presents difficulties to wheeled-transport. Agriculture is carried on in the valley in the neighbourhood of the villages of Akam, Nezu, Zindán, and Sir-Bágh.

8. *Khurram, 18 versts* (*12 miles*).—Two *versts* (1⅓ miles) from Sir-Bágh there is a stone bridge across the Khulm river. Further on a steep path-way leads up to the large hamlet of Gházi-Mazár, which is 4 *versts* (2⅔ miles) from Sir-Bágh. At the exit from this village there is a stone bridge. The track then leads up a hill, after which a descent, bearing west, brings the traveller to the gardens of Khurram.

The road from Sir-Bágh, as also that from Haibak, leads along the narrow gorge cut by the Khulm river. It is excessively stony, and therefore the passage of wheeled transport would be difficult.

9. *Rui* (*fortified village*), *26 versts* (*17⅓ miles*).—After emerging from the gardens of Khurram, a steep path-way leads along the left bank of the Khulm river to the village of Pul-i-Áb-Jili, which is surrounded by gardens. At the 6th *verst* (4th mile) there is a stone bridge over the Khulm river.

From here the track soon emerges from the gorge and gradually rises to the Chambarak pass. This ascent is difficult. A steep descent from the pass takes the track again into a gorge, which, however, comes to an end at the 13th *verst* (8⅔rd mile). Here an ascent begins, which leads to a pass that is also called Chambarak. This presents an

ascent still more difficult than the first of that name. The descent from this pass, however, though longer is more gradual. Its length is about 8 *versts* (5⅓ miles). At the 20th *verst* (13⅓rd mile) from Khurram, the road takes a sharp turn to the west (inclining towards the course of the Khulm river). At the 25th *verst* (16⅔rd mile) the descent from Chambarak pass No. 2 terminates, and the road passes over a stone bridge to the left bank of the Khulm river. From this point to Fort Rui the distance is only 1½ *versts* (1 mile). The Rui valley is very wide, thickly populated, and well cultivated. But at the Rui camping-ground there is neither fuel nor forage. Although this march up to the 20th *verst* (13⅓rd mile) is extremely stony, wheeled-transport can be taken over it.

10. *Duáb* (*fortified village*), *27 versts* (*18 miles*).—At Rui the road leaves the Khulm river and strikes into a track leading to the Rui stream, which, within a distance of about ¼ mile, has to be crossed eight times. The passage of this stream is not difficult, since it does not contain much water. At the 2nd *verst* (1⅓rd mile) the track enters a gorge about ⅛th mile in length. This gorge then widens out, but only to contract again a short distance on. The total length of the gorge is about 350 yards. At the 5th *verst* (3⅓rd mile) the road forks; one branch leading to the right by a *détour* to a mountain, the other entering a very narrow defile formed by lofty overhanging cliffs. This cleft is so confined that a horseman can with difficulty make his way through it. At the 8th *verst* (5⅓rd mile) both branches of the road unite, and the track then lies through a valley flanked by lofty, though not precipitous crags. At the 9th *verst* (6th mile) there is a very steep though not long ascent to a pass. The descent from this pass, which is 4 *versts* (2⅔rd miles) in length, leads to the narrow gorge marking the course of the Khulm river, which at the 15th, 16th and 17th *versts* (10th, 10⅔rd and 11⅓rd miles) is crossed by wooden bridges. At the 18th *verst* (12th mile) the road passes over a high and rocky spur and after that crosses another one of considerably less proportions. At the 21st *verst* (14th mile) the Khulm river is crossed by a wooden bridge. Beyond this bridge the valley of the river widens out and is under cultivation. At Fort Duáb the Khulm river is formed by the junction of two streams, one of which, the Ab-i-Akhurak, issues from a rocky locality to the south, the other from a spring to the south-east.

From Fort Rui, the road is excessively stony, and, therefore, the passage of carts over it would be very difficult. There is no fuel at the Duáb camping-ground, and forage is also scarce.

11. *Madár* (*village*), *26 versts* (*17⅓ miles*).—From Duáb the road, after crossing the Ab-i-Akhurak, passes in a south-east direction. At the 4th *verst* (2⅔rd mile) it turns to the south and then rises by a tortuous path-way to the Kizil-Kotal pass. Both the ascent to, and

the descent from, this pass are difficult. The descent, though shorter than the ascent, is more steep. Further on the road traverses a marshy valley, through which a stream courses.

At the 13th *verst* (8⅔rd mile) from Duáb a tortuous track leads to the crest of the Kára-Kotal pass. The descent from this pass is made over a slope and terminates at the 16th *verst* (10⅔rd mile) from Duáb. To the right of the road at this point there is a small fort and also a spring. Beyond the fort a very narrow and tortuous track rises by sharp ascents between two vertical crags which overhang and threaten to fall down. At the foot of this descent travellers have to take rest, which is necessary alike for man and beast.

From this point the track leads through ravines. At the 19th *verst* (12⅔rd mile) it rises to a mountain spur, and then, after lying through an undulating locality for a distance of 2 *versts* (1⅓ mile), again descends into ravines, from which a tempestuous stream rushes forth. At the 23rd *verst* (15⅓rd mile) the road, after descending into the valley of the Madár, passes by a bridge to the right bank of this stream. The valley of the Madár is wide and highly cultivated. On a mountain-spur to the left of the road are seen ruins of vast buildings which mark the site of the old town of Madár.

The march from Duáb to Madár is exceedingly stony. Indeed, this portion of the route is almost the most difficult between Mazár-i-Sharif and Kábul. For wheeled transport the descent from the Kára-Kotal pass is altogether impracticable. There is no fuel at the Madár camping-ground, and forage is also scarce.

12. *Shash-Burj, 17⅓ versts (26 miles).*—From Madár the road continues as before to keep to a southerly direction and to pass through the valley of the Madár. At the 7th *verst* (4⅔rd mile) it crosses the river by a bridge and then enters a narrow gorge formed by two crags which almost touch each other. Both ends of this gorge are closed by the castle of Baja, which also commands the Kamerd valley.

To the left of the castle a large orchard is seen. From the castle the road takes a sudden bend to the west and goes through the Kamerd valley, passing along the left bank of that stream, which flows from west to east. The Kamerd valley is wide and flanked on both sides by lofty overhanging cliffs. Here the road goes through a populated locality, and at the 21st *verst* (14th mile) enters the gardens of the village of Kamerd, which stretch for a distance of 3 *versts* (2 miles). Turning south, the road leads to the castle and village of Pain-Bágh. Near the castle the Kamerd stream is bridged. Beyond this bridge a small pass leads over a mountain-spur. The camping ground is in a garden at the foot of the Dandan-Shikan pass.

The valley bears the name of Shash-Burj, because of six towers rising up out of different parts of it. The march is stony throughout, but still

is practicable for wheeled transport. At Shash-Burj there are both fuel and forage. Rice cultivation begins in the valley of the Kamerd after the castle of Baja is passed. Opposite the camping ground of Shash-Burj a solitary tower rises up.

13. *Sigan* (*village*) *24 versts* (*16 miles*).—From Shash-Burj a narrow and tortuous track leads to the Dandan-Shikan pass, to the crest of which the distance is 4½ *versts* (3 miles). This ascent is very steep, smooth, and slippery, and therefore pack-animals frequently fall as they go up it. A horseman would act wisely by dismounting and leading his horse by the bridle. Frequent halts have to be made to take rest. Dandan-Shikan signifies the "breaking of the tooth," the name being derived from the circumstance that travellers, as they slip about the path-way, often receive very serious contusions. The height of the Dandan-Shikan pass is 5,600 feet.

Further on, the descent is easier and the road then comes out on to the Dasht-i-Gashak steppe. At the 8th *verst* (5⅓rd mile) there is a short and easy ascent and then a long and steep descent. At the 12th *verst* (8th mile) the road reaches the sharp Sigán descent, which is, however, shorter and easier than the Dandan-Shikan ascent; still the path-way by which the descent is made skirts an almost vertical drop into a ravine lying to the left of the road.

At the 15th *verst* (10th mile) the road enters a wide gorge which at the 18th *verst* (12th mile) comes out into the valley of the Sigán river, which is cultivated and contains inhabitants. At the entrance to this valley is the village of Deh-Imám. At the 20th *verst* (13⅓rd mile), the valley opens out, and in the centre of it is the large hamlet of Kereinákh. At the 21st *verst* (14th mile) the road turns to the east and the valley then becomes narrower. At the 25th *verst* (16⅔rd mile) lies the village of Sigán with its beautiful gardens. Generally speaking, this march is stony. Both the Dandan-Shikan ascent and the descent into the Sigán Valley are impracticable for carts; the whole of the rest of the road is, however, fit for wheeled transport. Forage and fuel are abundant.

14. *Rigi-nau, 22 versts* (*14⅔ miles*).—After crossing the Sigán stream by a bridge, the road enters a gorge at the bottom of which rushes a roaring mountain torrent. The gorge is shut in on both sides by lofty rocky hills and is very narrow, the road passing from one bank of the stream to the other. At the 2nd *verst* (1⅓rd mile) the gorge opens out and the track enters ploughed fields. At the 4th *verst* (2⅔rd mile) and to the right of the road is the village of Káfir-Kote. At the 6th *verst* (4th mile) the road is again confined, but at the 7th *verst* (4⅔rd mile) it once more enters open country and runs along the right bank of the Sigán river. To the left of the road stretches a ravine dotted over with mud huts. After passing through a small

ravine the road again enters a narrow gorge, which further on opens out into a well-cultivated valley. At the 12th *verst* (8th mile) the track once again winds through a narrow defile, passing from one bank of the Sigán to the other. To the left of the road at the 18th *verst* (12th mile) lies a steep-sided ravine, whence issues a stream.

After crossing this stream, the road passes through a small ravine. The locality called Rigi-Nau, or the "nine sands," has many subterranean springs, which lie near the surface of the ground, causing the neighbourhood to be very swampy and sandy. The road from Sigán is strewn over with pebbles and schist, and progress is therefore impeded, especially where the gorges traversed are very narrow. The route is practicable for carts. Neither forage nor fuel are procurable at this stage. In the neighbourhood of the serai of Sukhta-Chinár [9 *versts* (6 miles) from Sigán] the valley is under wheat, lucerne, and bean cultivation.

15. *Bámián* (*town*), *34 versts* (*22⅔ miles*).—From Rigi-Nau the road skirts the right bank of the stream which flows from the foot of the Ak-Rabát pass. At the 5th *verst* (3⅓rd mile) the rise to this pass begins. This rise, though sharp, is not long, and the road is very broad and even; at the 7th *verst* (4⅔rd mile) the descent from the Ak-Rabát pass begins. Here a very well-beaten track leads over a bold spur. At the 8th *verst* (5⅓rd mile) the road enters a narrow gorge, whence a winding path-way brings the traveller to the foot of the Ak-Rabát pass 9 *versts* (6 miles) from Rigi-Nau. At this point there is a ravine, out of which flows a stream which waters the Ak-Rabat valley, which is very fertile and thickly sown over with wheat and lucerne. At the 11th *verst* (7⅓rd mile) stands the fort of Ak-Rabát (height above the sea 10,200 feet), and a little further on there is a small serai. At the 12th *verst* (8th mile) the valley contracts into a narrow cleft, whence, after crossing the Ak-Rabát stream, the road rises to the Pelu pass. Both the ascent to and the descent from this pass are steep, but not long, and the road is broad and well-beaten. At the 15th *verst* (10th mile) the road enters a hollow flanked by high cliffs. At the 18th *verst* (12th mile) the road forks; one branch going to the right through a gorge leading into the Bámián valley, the other to the left over a very steep ascent to the Chashma-i-Pelu pass. Major-General Stolaitoff's Mission took the latter road since that through the gorge spoken of was impracticable because of recent heavy rain that had washed away the track.

After rising to the Chasma-i-Pelu pass, the road traverses a very undulating locality with sharp ascents and descents. At the 24th *verst* (16th mile) there is a spring to the left of the road. Beyond this a very tortuous and steep descent leads into the Bámián valley, where the route follows an undulating locality along the left bank of the Bámián river.

At the 27th *verst* (18th mile) the valley opens out and the road forks, one track passing through the very centre of the valley. At the 28th *verst* (18⅔rd mile) to the left of the road is seen a town composed of mud houses dug out of the overhanging cliff. At the 28th and 30th *versts* (18⅔rd and 20th miles) the road is flanked on the left by ravines, out of the last of which flows a stream which enters the Bámián river. Bámián is a fairly large place where barley and lucerne are procurable.

The Bámián valley is very fertile and well cultivated; scattered over it are numerous detached towers.

The march from Rigi-Nau is stony but practicable for wheeled transport. Forage and fuel are abundant.

16. *Muhammad-Topchi (castle), 18 versts (12 miles).*—After leaving Bámián, the road turns to the east. At the 3rd *verst* (2nd mile) gigantic idols hewn out of the cliff and numerous caverns are seen to the left of the road. The latter are inhabited by the people of Bámián. At a turn in the road a valley comes in sight bearing south-west; from this issues a stream which enters the Bámián-Daria. On the hills around are noticed traces of ruined and ancient buildings. On a high hill which rises up out of the valley appear the ruins of the ancient city of Gúlgul. The road passes close under the cliff with the idols, whilst below and to the right stretches the Bámián valley. At the 6th *verst* (4th mile) the road crosses a stream. At the 8th *versts* (5⅓rd mile) it enters the gorge of the Bámián River by a narrow pathway and then crosses a low but rocky spur. Similar spurs are crossed at the 10th and 11th *versts* (7th and 8th miles). At the 14th *verst* (9th mile) a ravine and a stream are crossed; at the 15th and 16th *versts* (10th and 11th miles) the road crosses two rocky spurs. On descending from the second of these, a ravine and the locality known as Agangar (the blacksmith) appear in view. At the 18th *verst* (12th mile) the tower or castle of Muhammad-Topchi with a grove of trees are reached. Opposite the tower is a ravine with a stream. The Kábul road passes through this ravine and comes out on to the Panj-Palang pass (the five elephants).* The march from Bámián is very stony and almost impracticable for carts. Fuel is obtained with difficulty, but forage is abundant.

The whole of the Bámián valley is beautifully cultivated. After leaving Bámián it gradually narrows and is overhung on both sides by vertical cliffs.

17. *Irák (valley), 16 versts (10⅔ miles).*—From the tower or castle of Muhammad-Topchi the road first of all passes through three ravines with sharp ascents and descents. At the 5th *verst* (3⅓rd mile) a hut is seen to the right of the road, and opposite this is the ravine called

* *Sic in origine*, but *palang* is a Persian word for a tiger, panther or leopard.—W. E. G.

Zokhák; further on the road bends southwards, crossing the Bámián river by a ford, and passing under the mountain called Zokhák, it then crosses the Kalu river by a ford; the latter stream flows into the Bámián river, a little further on. Beyond this junction the road resumes an easterly direction and rises on to a slope by a short and easy ascent.

Near the ford over the Kalu stream are seen on a precipitous crag the ruins of an ancient town encircled by a stone wall; these ruins mark the former site of the small town of Zokhák. At the 8th *verst* (5⅓rd mile) the road enters a gorge and runs along the dry bed of a stream. After gradually ascending a ravine the road reaches the foot of the Lesser Irák pass. At the 12th *verst* (8th mile) the ascent to this pass is made, but it is neither long nor steep. At the 14th *verst* (9⅓rd mile) a road branches off to the Shibar pass. From here a narrow and very tortuous track passes by steep descents to the Irák valley. This valley is very fertile, well cultivated, and thickly populated. The march from the tower of Muhammad-Topchi is stony, but not difficult for wheeled-transport, except at the actual descent into the Irák valley, and here the path-way winds round a crag in a very tortuous fashion.

18. *Kala-Karzár, 35 versts (23⅓ miles).*—After leaving the camping ground in the Irák valley, the road soon enters a confined country, and having crossed the Irák stream runs along its right bank, where the track is very narrow. At the 3rd *verst* (2nd mile) two towers rise up on the left bank of the stream. At the 6th *verst* (4th mile) the road is obstructed by the ruins of the fort of Káfir-Kala. Beyond this the valley widens, but at the 8th *verst* (5⅓rd mile) it again contracts. At the 14th *verst* (9⅓rd mile) there are ferruginous springs on both banks of the river. When General Stolaitoff's Mission passed along this road on the 24th July (5th August) 1878, the valley was blocked with snow at the 18th *verst* (12th mile). At the 20th *verst* (13⅓rd mile) the road approaches the foot of the Greater Irák pass. The ascent to this pass is very steep, but the track is wide and well-beaten. At the 25th *verst* (16⅔rd mile) the road descends from the pass over very steep ground, and then almost at once enters a narrow gorge. At the 30th *verst* (20th mile) *i.e.*, at the foot of the descent from this gorge, a stream issues forth. Beyond this point the road turns to the south and south-east and soon afterwards reaches the fort of Kala-Karzár.

From the Irák valley to the Greater Irák pass the road lies through a narrow gorge and is throughout strewn over with schist, but after the pass has been left behind the track is much less stony and becomes well-beaten, so that it is here practicable for carts. Neither fuel nor forage are procurable at the camping-ground of Kala-Karzár.

19. *Gardan-Diwár (fort), 21 versts (14 miles).*—At the fort of Kala-Karzár, the road is joined by another which leads along the course of the Ghiljatai from the Kalu pass. Turning south the road crosses the

last-mentioned river and then passes over a low spur. At the 2nd *verst* (1⅓rd mile) there is a ravine. Beyond this the road resumes its former direction and crosses the dry bed of the Ghiljatai, which follows a very narrow gorge.

To the right of the road at the 4th *verst* (2⅔rd mile) there is a group of huts, and a little further on a ravine, at the bottom of which a stream courses. At the 7th *verst* (4⅔rd mile) the road crosses six other ravines, which also contain water. The last of these has steep sides. To the right and to the left of the road detached towers appear in sight. At the 10th *verst* (6⅔rd mile) a steep descent leads into the valley of the Ghiljatai, and the road which follows the right bank of this stream thus reaches Gardan-Diwár. At the 20th *verst* (13⅓rd mile) the track lies through a very narrow gorge, flanked by lofty overhanging cliffs. At the 21st *verst* (14th mile) there is a shallow ford. A short distance below this ford the Ghiljatai enters the Helmand. The course of the Helmand at this point bears south-west, its valley being narrow. The march from Kala-Karzár to the descent into the valley of the Ghiljatai is but little stony. The road at first runs over an undulating country and then enters a very narrow gorge. This march is practicable for wheeled transport. Neither forage nor fuel are procurable at Gardan-Diwár.

20. *Sir-i-Chashma (village), 36 versts (24 miles).*—From Gardan-Diwár the road, after crossing the Helmand by a ford, passes along an over-hanging cornice, and at the 2nd *verst* (1⅓rd mile) turns to the south and enters a narrow gorge, at the bottom of which rushes a stream that flows into the Helmand. Here the road turns to the south-east. At the 9th *verst* (6th mile) the track begins to ascend and then descends into a ravine by a steep path-way. There is water in this ravine. Soon afterwards the road rises by steep ascents, and at the 13th *verst* (8⅔rd mile) passes through a ravine with steep sides, in which there is water. From this ravine the road rises to the Yurd plateau, and after passing the village of Yurd, continues to ascend until it reaches the 18th *verst* (12th mile). Further on, after descending sharply into the deeply-cut bed of the mountain stream, the road rises to the Unnai pass [19th *verst* (12⅔rd mile)]. This ascent is very steep, and snow appears on the neighbouring hills. The descent from the pass leads by a sharp track into a wild and narrow gorge, in which communication is maintained by means of a cornice cut along the left bank of the stream. At the 22nd *verst* (14⅔rd mile) the gorge opens out. At the 27th *verst* (18th mile) to the left of the road stands the picturesque castle of Unnai. Here the road turns to the south-west for a short distance ½ *verst* (⅓rd mile), and then again inclines to the south-east. Further on it passes by a wooden bridge to the right bank of the stream. To the left of the road at this point there is a large garden and to the right on a hill a hamlet with two towers. At the 36th *verst*

(24th mile) there are numerous springs in the valley, which uniting form one river, which may be said to be the source of the Kábul-Daria. The march from Gardan-Diwár is not very stony. As far as the Unnai pass it traverses an undulating country and then a deep gorge. This march is practicable for carts. Both fuel and forage are abundant.

21. *Katta-Ashraf (village), 30 versts (20 miles).*—The road inclines eastwards and passes along the right bank of the Kábul-Daria. At the 3rd *verst* (2nd mile) it enters the village of Takin. After issuing from this village, at the 5th *verst* (3⅓rd mile) the road makes a great sweep, and soon afterwards enters a narrow gorge, wherein it twice crosses, by means of wooden bridges, from one side of the gorge to the other. Further on this gorge opens out, and the road, after taking a north-east direction, descends to the Kábul-Daria. At the 9th *verst* (6th mile) it crosses by a wooden bridge to the left bank of that river. To the right of this bridge is situated the hamlet of Jatrám. Beyond this the road goes along a cornice in an easterly direction and soon afterwards enters a valley, crossing a stream at the 11th *verst* (7⅓rd mile). At the 12th *verst* (8th mile) there is a wooden bridge over a stream of considerable size, which carries its waters to the Kábul-Daria. To the left is opened out the vast valley of this river, which is thickly populated and splendidly cultivated. At the 13th *verst* (8⅔rd mile) is the village of Dzalráz. At the 16th *verst* (10⅔rd mile), to the right of the road, is the hamlet of Zaminák, whence the road passes on to an easy slope. At the 18th *verst* (12th mile) is the hamlet of Zebudák, and at the 23rd *verst* (15⅓rd mile) in a valley lies the hamlet of Rustam-Khel. At the 25th *verst* (16⅔rd mile) the road crosses two streams flowing northwards. At the 30th *verst* (20th mile) is the village of Kátta-Ashraf, at the exit from which the road crosses a stream flowing north-east to join the Kábul-Daria. The road from Sir-i-Chashma is fit for wheeled-transport, although some portions of it are little stony. The valley of the Kábul-Daria is well cultivated throughout, and is almost entirely taken up with gardens. Both fuel and forage are procurable.

22. *Kala-i-Kázi, 26 versts (17⅓ miles).*—At the village of Kátta-Ashraf the road leaves the Kábul-Daria and turns eastwards. At the 3rd and 4th *versts* (2nd and 3rd miles) it crosses two valleys with streams flowing through them. Further on the road gradually ascends a hill, and the further it goes the more steep does it become. At the 6th *verst* (4th mile) the road crosses a stream. At the 8th *verst* (5⅓rd mile) there is a sharp ascent up a winding path-way. At the 9th *verst* (6th mile) the country becomes undulating, and at the 11th *verst* (7⅓rd mile) the road ascends the pass called Sufaid-Kák (white earth). The descent from this pass is at first smooth and easy, but at the 13th *verst* (8⅔rd mile) a very narrow and steep path-way leads into the valley of the Urgundi, which stretches to a width of 4 *versts* (2⅔ miles), and is excellently

cultivated, as well as being thickly populated. At the 15th *verst* (10th mile) the road crosses the dry bed of the river. At the 16th *verst* (10⅔rd mile) the village of Urgundi stands to the left of the road, and from here a path branches off to the south-west that leads to Ghazni. At the 17th *verst* (11⅓rd mile) the road crosses a river which flows from the north-east, *i.e.*, from the upper valley of the Urgundi. At the 19th *verst* (12⅔rd mile) the Urgundi is crossed by a ford and then the road rises to a rocky bluff. Here to the left of the road stretches a vast plain splendidly irrigated and thickly populated. At the 21st *verst* (14th mile), a bye-path to the left leads to a handsome castle, behind which is situated the village of Khum-Kák (good soil). Beyond this the valley narrows and the road passes another well-cultivated plain. At the 26th *verst* (17⅓rd mile) the village of Kala-i-Kázi stands to the right of the road. The march from Kátta-Ashraf, although stony, is practicable for wheeled-transport. Both fuel and forage are procurable.

23. *Kábul* (*town*), *15 versts* (*10 miles*).—From Kala-i-Kázi the road inclines eastwards, traversing the excellently cultivated and thickly populated valley of the Changardak. At the 4th *verst* (2⅔rd mile) the road crosses a water-course, and at the 6th *verst* (4th mile) enters gardens which extend right up to Kábul. At the 10th *verst* (6⅔rd mile) it crosses by a ford a fairly wide river, which flows from the north-east from the upper valley of the Changardak. Beyond this by road enters a bazaar of the city from which it passes through the city gates. At the 13th *verst* (8⅔rd mile) the road again passes through a bazaar, and at the 15th *verst* (10th mile) the Kábul-Daria is crossed by a ford. Progress is now made through valleys and avenues of trees until the south-east extremity of the city is reached, and here on a precipitous hill stands the citadel of Kábul, the Bála-Hissár. To the south-east of the Bála-Hissár stretches a vast depression flooded with water, which remains throughout the summer, producing *miasma* and its attendant fevers.*

* For further information regarding this route, see Dr. Yavórski's *Account of the Journey of the Russian Mission to Afghánistán and the Khánate of Bukhára in 1878-79*.—W. E. G.

II.—Route from the town of Mazár-i-Sharif to the Town of Herát.

[Compiled from Kostenko's *Turkistán* and the march route of Colonel N. I. Grodekoff.]

Mazár-i-Sharif is the chief town of Afghán-Turkistán and the residence of the Governor-General of that province. It has a population of 25,000 inhabitants, comprising Uzbaks and Afgháns. The city has numerous gardens attached to it. The buildings of Mazár-i-Sharif are cupola-shaped. In the city stands Ali's tomb, over which a mosque has been erected, having four azure-coloured minarets. At the 3rd *verst* (2nd mile) is the fort of Takhtapul, in which there is a gun and rifle foundry, also a factory for the preparation of sword-blades, knives, and felt head-dresses.

1. *Didaadi* (*village*), *10 versts* (*6⅔ miles*).—The road from Mazár-i-Sharif is perfectly level. It passes to the south of the fort of Takhtapul and the village of Shirábád, *viz.*, 2 *versts* (1⅓ miles) to the south of the former and 1 *verst* (⅔ mile) to the south of the latter. In the meridian of Shirábád a water-course approaches the road, and from here ploughed fields lie on either side of it right up to the village of Didaadi, which contains about 200 houses inhabited by Uzbaks.

2. *Zainál-Obedin-Baimar* (*tomb*), *38½ versts* (*25⅔ miles*).—From Didaadi the road is perfectly level. To the left are spurs of the Hindu-Kush; to the right stretch ploughed fields. At the 11th *verst* (7⅓rd mile) the road crosses the Bálkh river, which is known to the people of the country by the name of Band-i-Wárwár (the barbarian's dam). The Balkh river here flows through rocky banks about 50 yards apart. An excellent stone-bridge on three piers, called Imám-Mukhra, has been thrown across the river at this point. The Bálkh is a stream of some volume, being 35 yards across and flowing in one bed. Beyond the river traces of the ancient Bactria begin to appear in the shape of ruins. These are scattered far away to the north and north-west.

A copious water-course runs by the side of the road, and this has to be crossed several times by small bridges. At the 19th *verst* (12⅔rd mile), and not far from the right of the road, is the small hamlet of Ogan-Kala. At the 38½ *verst* (25⅔rd mile) stands the tomb of Zainál-Obedin-Baimar, and near it is a serai. The country round is highly cultivated.

3. *Salmazár* (*village*), *51 versts* (*34 miles*).—The first 7 *versts* (5 miles) from the camping-ground pass over a plain, then an ascent is made to a low spur, followed by a descent to the valley of the Salmán, which contains 40 houses inhabited by Uzbaks. From Salmán the road, after crossing two low passes, comes out on to a plain from 2 to 3 *versts* (1 to 2 miles) wide, flanked by high hills of some soft formation. The

length of this valley is about 13⅓rd miles and the road through it is perfectly smooth and level. Both the surface of the valley and the slopes of the adjacent hills are covered with long grass. After leaving this valley, the road ascends to a hill on the slope of which stands a solitary shepherd's hut, and near it the Mogol dam has been built to collect the water of two small streams. The store of water in this reservoir is not, however, great. From the Mogol dam the road turns to the south-west and continues in this direction for about a *verst* (⅔ mile), after which it first of all rises to the crest of a pass and then descends into a high-lying valley. Through this valley the road maintains a westerly direction for a distance of 14 *versts* (9⅓ miles). When Colonel Grodekoff passed through this valley on the 21st October (2nd November) 1878, it was overgrown with an abundant supply of grass, affording pasture for the herds of the Turkumáns. After leaving this high-lying valley, the traveller comes out on to a vast plain watered by the Sar-i-Pul river. For a distance of 3 *versts* (2 miles) during the descent on to this plain, the road is flanked by sands covered with *saksaul* and tamarisk. Further on there are ploughed fields. From the point where the descent spoken of begins to the village of Salmazár the distance is 10 *versts* (6⅔ miles). Salmazár contains 40 houses and lies on both banks of the Sar-i-Pul river, which here flows between high banks about 20 yards apart. The inhabitants of Salmazár are Uzbaks, and they live for the most part in *kibitkas* pitched inside court-yards, but they also occupy houses. There are numerous well-watered gardens around this settlement.

4. *Sar-i-Pul (town), 38 versts (25⅓ miles).*—At a point ½ *verst* (⅓rd mile) from Salmazár the road passes to the left bank of the Sar-i-Pul river. The ford is not a deep one and the bottom is sandy. The country round is level and excellently cultivated. At the 17½th *verst* (11⅔rd mile), where lie the ruins of Jidailik, the road enters a valley flanked by low hills. The width of this valley is from 1½ to 3 *versts* (1 to 2 miles). Before reaching Jidailik the road passes to the right bank of the river and runs along it. At 2½ *versts* (1⅔ miles) from Jidailik is the small village of Hazrat-Imám (10 houses). At 5 *versts* (3⅓ miles) beyond this again stands the large village of Sayadábád (50 houses). From this village to Sar-i-Pul the river flows in one bed with sloping banks which, during the spring season, are inundated to a great distance. The low-lying swampy spots are overgrown with thick reeds. At Sayadábád the road rises to a plateau on which the village has been built. It then crosses a broad water-course by a bridge and follows the base of the hills for a distance of 2 *versts* (1⅓ miles). After this the road turns into the bottom of the valley, where stands the town of Sar-i-Pul. At the 31st *verst* (20⅔rd mile) and by the roadside is the hamlet of Kal-Kishlák, and to the right are the hamlets of Kur and Bassud.

To the left at the foot of the hills is Kalako. At the 37th *verst* (24⅔rd mile) begin the gardens of Sar-i-Pul, and at the 38th *verst* (25⅓rd mile) and within the limits of the city the road crosses the river by a wooden bridge. Throughout this march the soil is clayey, but, generally speaking, the road is fit for wheeled-transport. Fuel in the shape of reeds is abundant, and forage can be obtained from the same growth.

The valley of the Sar-i-Pul river is feverish, and on this account is very injurious to the health of man.

The town of Sar-i-Pul contains 3,000 inhabitants. It extends for a great distance on both banks of the river and is encircled by vast gardens. A small citadel rises up in the centre of the town, the inhabitants of which are Uzbaks.

5. *Kurchi* (*village*), *54 versts* (*36 miles*).—After leaving Sar-i-Pul, the road for the first 3 *versts* (2 miles) goes along a plain at the foot of the hills and skirts the bank of a small stream called Mirza-Aulang, which falls into the Sar-i-Pul. The road then enters a gorge flanked on both sides by low hills, after which it follows a stream. At the 10th *verst* (6⅔rd mile) it rises on to a spur on the left bank of the Mirza-Aulang. At the 13th *verst* (8⅔rd mile) the road descends to a stream near the village of Sayad (200 houses). Further on are passed the villages of Kur, Gur, and Furgán-Tekke, all of which lie along the left bank of the Mirzar-Aulang river. The road passes over a spur 70 feet above the right bank of this river. Four years ago this road was widened for the passage of the Afghán troops *en route* to Maimana. The width of the present road is, however, only equal to the distance between the wheels of a field-gun carriage, so that were a horseman to meet a detachment on the march, he could not get past, and he would therefore have to dismount and go along the left bank of the river. The widening of the road has been carried out for a distance of 2½ *versts* (1⅔ miles), *i.e.*, as far as the village of Kur. From here there is a mere track to a stream which is crossed and skirted for the rest of the march. Beyond the village of Furgán-Tekke the road enters a rocky gorge which is shut in by a small fort built of stone obtained on the spot. The fort consists of loop-holed walls running right across the gorge. The work was thrown up by the troops of Maimana against the Afgháns. The gorge is 12½ *versts* (8⅓ miles) long, and its sides are covered with *archa* (pencil cedar). The road through it is stony, and passes several times from one bank of the Mirza-Aulang to the other. The width of the track is sufficient to admit of the passage of artillery, but it would first of all have to be cleared of stones.

At a distance of 1½ *versts* (1 mile) from the fort just described, and at a point where the gorge somewhat widens, there is another quadrangular redoubt. At the 30th *verst* (20th mile) the gorge terminates, and the road enters a vast depression, shut in on all sides by high hills. The

surface of this depression is covered with luxuriant grass. From the bottom of the depression there is an ascent to a high range which marks the line of the water-shed between the basins of the Sar-i-Pul and the Sangalak rivers. This ascent is at first easy, but the higher the elevation the steeper is the ascent. The total length of the ascent to the crest of the pass is 4 *versts* (2⅔ miles). Artillery could, however, make its way up aided by infantry. The descent from the pass is also 4 *versts* (2⅔ miles) long, and it, too, is very steep. From the foot of this descent a very narrow, rocky, and dark gorge begins, the sides of which are from 100 to 140 feet high. The width of this gorge varies from 8 to 10 paces. In one place the edges of the cliff are so close to each other that one might jump across. This gorge is 5 *versts* (3⅓ miles) long; its sides are clad with *archa*, and along its bottom huge stones are heaped up. After emerging from this gorge the road enters a wide valley surrounded by high hills. Here begin ploughed fields belonging to the village of Kurchi. These extend for a distance of 6½ *versts* (4⅓ miles) from the exit from the rocky gorge.

The village of Kurchi has 300 houses. Its inhabitants are Uzbaks, who live in *kibitkas* pitched inside court-yards, but some of them occupy houses. The village boasts of a citadel.

6. *Belcherág (village), 32 versts (20⅓ miles).*—From Kurchi the road passes through a level valley covered, for the most part, with a soft soil. There is much water, but no forest growth. In spring there is good under-foot herbage.

The following hamlets are passed *en route* at the 5th *verst* (3⅓rd mile) Archat; at the 15th *verst* (10th mile) Kaulián; at the 25th *verst* (16⅔rd mile) Takhlamast.

The village of Belcherág lies in a vast depression, and contains about 300 houses. The inhabitants are Uzbaks, who live in *kibitkas* and are occupied in husbandry.

7. *Maimana (town), 40 versts (26⅔ miles).*—At 1½ *versts* (1 mile) from Belcherág the road enters a rocky gorge with overhanging sides. The gorge is from ¼ to ½ *versts* (⅙th to ⅓rd mile) wide, and is cultivated and covered with gardens throughout. At its bottom rushes the wide and deep stream of Belcherág, which is crossed in three different places by excellent stone bridges. The gorge is 12 *versts* (8 miles) long. At its exit the road rises on to a high spur, and in this way a narrow and impracticable bit of road is turned, which is sometimes under water. The rest of the track has been cleared of stones and protected from inundation by a series of dams. After descending from the spur the track again comes out on to the Belcherág stream, the banks of which from this point and as far as the village of Dereche, a distance of 2½ *versts* (1⅔ miles), are overgrown with thorn bushes and coarse reeds. From the village of Dereche the road continues to keep

close to the Belcherág stream. The locality passed through is hilly, but progress is quite easy. At the 20th *verst* (13⅓rd mile) the ruined fort and village of Kátta-Kala are passed. At the 23rd *verst* (15⅓rd mile) is a group of villages called Hazár-Kishlák, and 2½ *versts* (1⅔rd miles) further on is the village of Darshán. At the 34th *verst* (22⅔rd mile) the Belcherág stream is bridged. Here the track rises on to a spur by a very steep and difficult ascent, 3 *versts* (2 miles) long. After this it descends into the vast and well-cultivated valley of Maimana. The town of Maimana is 3 *versts* (2 miles) from the point where the road enters the valley.

The town of Maimana is encircled by a wall 21 feet high and also a ditch. The town possesses a citadel raised on an artificial dam. The walls of the citadel are 28 feet high. The town was laid in ruins during its siege by the Afgháns in 1875, but it still possesses a population of 2,000 Uzbaks.

8. *Kaisar* (*village*), *44 versts* (*29⅓ miles*).—After leaving the town of Maimana the road for the first 3 *versts* (2 miles) traverses the perfectly level bottom of the valley. It then enters the hills and crosses a number of spurs and ravines, so that there are constant ascents and descents. The track here is very narrow, and runs over a clayey soil. *En route* two springs with fresh water are passed, the one at the 10th the other at the 15th *verst* (6⅔rd and 10th mile) from Maimana. At 19½ *versts* (13 miles) the road descends into the valley of the Almár river. At the 21st *verst* (14th mile) the village of this name is reached. It contains 60 houses. The valley of the Almár is 3 *versts* (2 miles) wide. After running through the valley of this stream for a distance of 3 *versts* (2 miles), the road again enters the hills, and assumes its former character, *i.e.*, it traverses a very undulating style of country possessed of a clayey soil. This being its character for a distance of 18 *versts* (12 miles), the road now descends into the valley of the Kaisar, and 2 *versts* (1⅓ miles) further on reaches the village of the same name.

9. *Chahár-Shamba* (*village*), 31 *versts* (*20⅔ miles*).—From Kaisar the road keeps to the valley for a distance of 6 *versts* (4 miles) and then enters the hills, running through undulating country for a distance of 5 *versts* (3⅓ miles). The track emerges from the hills in the neighbourhood of the small village of Chichaktu. At the 24th *verst* (16th mile) a group of villages called Hazár-Kishlák is reached, and at the 30th *verst* (20th mile) Chahár-Shamba is entered. This village contains 400 houses, and is the last settled point in the valley of the Kaisar.

In consequence of plundering on the part of the Tekke-Turkumáns, the road to Herát, and further on along the course of the Murghób and the country of the Firuzkohis, has been abandoned by caravans, which, on leaving Kaisar, go through Hajikand and Kala-i-nau, traversing a barren and very difficult mountain track.

10. *Togai-Kára-Jangal*, *50 versts* (*33⅓ miles*).—On leaving Chahár-

Shamba the road turns to the south and crosses a low range. At the 5th *verst* (3⅓rd mile) it reaches the village of Osóbi-Kaf. At the 10th *verst* (6⅔rd mile) the road enters a gorge near the ruins of Takhta-Khatin. From here Grodekoff turned across ploughed fields, making many ascents and descents. He found this portion of the march very difficult. On every side he saw traces of abandoned cultivation. The gorge through which the Togai-Kára-Jangal stream flows is fringed with reeds.

11. *Bála-Murghób, 55 versts (36⅔ miles).*—The road for the first 2 *versts* (1⅓ miles) passes along the bank of the Togai-Kára-Jangal stream, and then after a sharp bend to the south-west traverses for a distance of 25 *versts* (26⅔ miles) an extremely undulating country. After this the track comes out into the valley of the Togai-Kára-Jangal stream, which here flows at the foot of the lofty Kára-Jangal range. A robber's path runs along both banks of the stream named. After 5 *versts* (3⅓ miles) of this track have been traversed, an ascent begins to the Kára-Jangal range; 4½ *versts* (3 miles) of this ascent are very steep and covered with stones, amidst which *archa* trees and pistachio bushes are scattered. The crest of the ridge is very rocky. The Kára-Jangal range runs parallel to the main range of the Paropamisus, to which it is scarcely inferior in height. The road down from the Kára-Jangal range is so steep that it is quite impossible to retain one's seat on a horse, in descending from it. The rocky portion of this road is 2 *versts* (1⅓ miles) long, after which the track inclines to the north-west and so gradually runs down to the Murghób river. From here the road passes for a distance of 2 *versts* (1⅓ miles) over a perfectly level country, and then after rising on to a low spur enters a very narrow gorge 2 *versts* (1⅓ miles) in length.

The ruins of the fort of Bála-Murghób rise to a height of 350 feet on both sides of the exit from the above gorge. Bála-Murghób marks the boundary between Afghán-Turkistán and the province of Herát.

12. *Darabaum (village), 28 versts (18⅔ miles).*—From Bála-Murghób the track turns sharply to the south and enters the wide and level valley of the Murghób river, which is bounded on the right by a high rocky bluff and on the left by a line of low hills with soft outlines. The valley of the Murghób is from 2 to 3 *versts* (1⅓ to 2 miles) wide, and is covered with reeds and grass as high as a man's chest. The track, which is not much frequented, is covered with vegetation of the kind mentioned, so that a traveller makes his way along with great difficulty. The Murghób flows in one bed which runs close to the left bank. The river is only fordable in a few places, and there with great difficulty. At the point where Colonel Grodekoff crossed it, it was about 80 yards wide. After passing to the left bank the track follows the course of a stream which falls into the Murghób. It then enters a rocky gorge so choked with reeds that it is very difficult to make one's

way along. The width of this gorge varies from 50 to 90 yards. The road passes from one bank of the river to the other several times, and on both sides is obstructed by huge stones. At the 12th *verst* (8th mile) the road crosses to the left bank of the river and runs along a gallery or cornice for a distance of 8 *versts* (5⅓ miles). It then turns to the west and enters a wide valley, which it follows for a distance of 6 *versts* (4 miles). From the valley the road passes on to a wide plateau covered with ploughed fields. It then turns to the south, and within a distance of 2 *versts* (1⅓ miles) reaches the village of Darabaum.

The inhabitants of this village are Firuzkohis, of Persian origin. They live for the most part in *kibitkas*, for there are not more than five houses in the place.

13. *Kala-i-Nau* (*fort*), *37 versts* (*24⅔ miles*).—From Darabaum the road rises to a low pass, not steep, of which the soil is soft. The track then runs for 3 *versts* (2 miles) along a valley bounded by low hills. It once more ascends to a pass, crosses a valley, and again rises to three passes. At the 15th *verst* (12th mile) the road comes out into the wide meadow of Sanjatak-Poin, over which are scattered several score *kibitkas* of the Hazára tribe. From here there begins a narrow valley 2½ *versts* (1⅔ miles) long, and then the large meadow of Sanjatak-Bála is reached which is also dotted over with the ploughed fields and *kibitkas* of the Hazára tribe. From Sanjatak-Bála the road is level and good, and traverses an elevated plateau surrounded by low hills. It thus reaches, Kala-i-Nau, the chief town of the Hazára tribe—people of Turki origin. At Kala-i-Nau there are two forts, the old and the new; there is also a bazaar, as well as many mud houses. The greater number of the inhabitants live, however, in *kibitkas*.

14. *Kushk* (*village*), *55 versts* (*36⅔ miles*).—Two *versts* (1⅓ miles) from Kala-i-Nau the road enters a forest of pistachio-nut trees. At first the track follows an undulating country; it then rises by three steep ascents to a level valley; one of these ascents is stony. At the 35th *verst* (23⅓rd mile) the road traverses a wide valley. Throughout the whole of this stretch of country and for 10 *versts* (6⅔ miles) more there is no water at all, but the pasturage *en route* is excellent. At the 45th *verst* (30th mile) the road leaves the pistachio forest and here crosses a small brackish stream. A steep ascent and descent brings the traveller to the basin of the Kushk river. Several villages, bearing the general name of Kushk, stretch for a distance of 5 *versts* (3⅓ miles) along the valley of the river of the same name, which here flows in several channels. The width of the Kushk valley is about 4 *versts* (2⅔ miles), and its bottom is strewn with boulders. The inhabitants are Jámshidis, of Persian origin. They live for the most part in houses, but a few occupy *kibitkas*.

15. *Shirmás* (*village*), *40 versts* (*26⅔ miles*).—After emerging from the principal village of the Kushk group, in which there is a citadel and the

Khán's palace, the road at the end of the 2nd *verst* (1⅓ mile) crosses a low spur and then rises to the Paropamisus range. The length of this ascent is 7 *versts* (4⅔ miles). At first the ascent is easy and over soft soil, but higher up it becomes steep and rocky.

The pass is called Hazrat-i-Bába, from a tomb situated at a distance of 2 *versts* (1⅓ miles) from its summit.

The pass is covered with snow from the middle or end of December to the middle or end of April, but this fact does not altogether stop communication. Both the summit of the pass and the descent from it are rocky, and the latter is also very steep and difficult.

In descending from the pass the track follows the edge of a precipitous ravine, at the bottom of which rushes a mountain stream. At the 25th and again at the 30th *verst* (16⅔rd and 20th miles) the track crosses the ravine. At the 33rd *verst* (22nd mile) the track emerges from a gorge and enters a valley about 5 *versts* (3⅓ miles) wide. At the 40th *verst* (26⅔rd mile) stands the village of Shirmás, the inhabitants of which are Persians. Shirmás contains about 30 houses, and is subject to constant Turkumán raids.

16. *Herát (town), 18 versts (12 miles).*—From Shirmás the road resumes a southerly direction and traverses a valley 2 *versts* (1⅓ mile) wide. It then rises to a low spur of the Paropamisus range and enters the wide valley of the Hari-Rud. At the 5th *verst* (3⅓rd mile) are the ruins of Surkh-Rabát, and at the 4th *verst* (2⅔rd mile) begin a group of villages that extend right up to Herát. The road is perfectly level. Herát has a population of 50,000 inhabitants. The town is encircled by a stone wall, 28 feet high, with towers. In front of the wall is a shallow ditch. No guns are mounted on the walls. Herát could not be defended against European troops, because the town is commanded by heights 1½ *versts* (1 mile) to the north, and from here the place could be destroyed by artillery fire. In the centre of the town is the citadel, which is built on an artificial dam. The walls of the citadel are 28 feet high, and in some places are much out of repair. They are surrounded by a wet ditch.

III.—Route from Kandahar to Herát.

[This description is borrowed from the pages of the *Voyenni Sbornik* No. 3 of 1881, in which is inserted a review of *Herát, the Granary and Garden of Central Asia;* by Colonel Malleson.

On the high road between Herát and Kandahar there are three places of importance: Sabzawár, Farrah, and Girishk. The length of the entire route is 553 *versts* (368⅔ miles). From Kandahar to Girishk the distance is about 113 *versts* (75½ miles).]

1. *Kokerán, 10½ versts (7 miles).*—For the first 4½ *versts* (3 miles) the road lies through the suburbs and gardens of the city, which are encircled by walls. The road crosses several canals diverted from the Argandáb river for the irrigation of the Kandahar valley. There is much water at Kokerán, and the place is well adapted for the camping-ground of a large army, and can furnish supplies, forage, &c., &c., in sufficient quantity.

2. *Sanjári, 7½ versts (5 miles).*—Between Kokerán and Sanjári the Argandáb has to be crossed. In June the depth of this river does not exceed 2¼ feet. At a distance of about 1 *verst* (⅔rd mile) from Kokerán there is a very practicable ford, across which heavy guns can be taken. On the other bank two aqueducts have to be crossed. The road is stony in places, but is generally speaking good. At Sanjári there is an excellent camping-ground. The water-supply is sufficient, and supplies are very abundant.

3. *Hauz-i-Madad-Khán, 21 versts (14 miles).*—From Sanjári there is an excellent road across a wide level valley with a hard soil. Along the whole of this march and parallel with the road stretches a canal. Consequently, the water-supply is abundant. Food for camels, too, is at hand, the pasture ground being to the south of the road. There are many villages in the neighbourhood, and around these graze flocks of sheep and goats.

4. *Kushk-i-Nakhud, 23½ versts (15⅔ miles).*—Soil firm. Road level and strewn with gravel. Water abundant and procured from two aqueducts. Camping-ground very good. Food for camels procurable, but supply of grass near at hand scanty.

5. *Khák-i-Chapán, 14¾ versts (9⅚ miles).*—Road, generally speaking, level and good, although in places it lies over deep sands. Camping-ground cut up by ravines, but sufficiently large to suffice for a considerable force. Water sufficient, but not abundant. Pasturage fairly sufficient. At a distance of 4½ *versts* (3 miles) to the south of the camping-ground there is a village surrounded by cultivation and meadow land, whereon large flocks of sheep are grazed.

6. *Girishk,* distance about 36 *versts* (*24 miles*).—The road runs along

the left bank of the Helmand for a distance of 30 *versts* (20 miles). It is good and the soil is hard. The first part is slightly undulating, and here and there runs over a sandy soil. Half-way there is a well of which the water only suffices for a very small number of people. On the left bank of the river there is a spot which is peculiarly well suited for a camping-ground, for both water and supplies are abundant. The passage of the Helmand on this march is difficult, and in the month of June the river has a depth of 3¾ feet, its greatest width being 70 yards. The Helmand here runs with a velocity of 4½ *versts* (3 miles) an hour. There is a ford also which might be made a good one. At Girishk there is a good camping-ground, although the country is a little intersected. Water and forage are abundant.

Old Girishk was one continuous garden, but owing to Afghán oppression the locality is now completely devastated. The city walls are almost in ruins, but on mounting up to them a splendid view is obtained of the country round. The place could afford no sort of protection against artillery-fire.

In the opinion of Ferrier and of Marsh the distance from Girishk to Farrah is 180 *versts* (120 miles). A side road some 30 *versts* (20 miles) shorter leads through Shoráb and Khazán-Jilán, but of this Malleson could obtain no exact information.

7. *Zirak*, (*Zarak*) *30 versts* (*20 miles*).—For the first 9 *versts* (6 miles) the road is stony and undulating and crosses the beds of several streams. It then passes over a smooth and good road which runs right up to the fort of Saadat, distant 27 *versts* (18 miles) from Girishk.

At one time Saadat was a threatening fortress, but in 1873, when Captain Marsh visited it, it was one heap of ruins. Water is still abundant in the neighbourhood. Beyond the ruins, marking the site of this fort, there is an undulating road right up to Zirak (Zarak), which is a small village at the foot of the mountains to the right of the Herát route. It stands almost immediately opposite Máhmudábád, which is also a small village lying in a valley watered by a canal. Water is abundant at Zirak, and it is of good quality. Forage is obtainable in sufficient quantities.

8. *Dushák*, *18¾ versts* (*12½ miles*).—Road level; soil hard. Half way lies the village of Zur, where there is good water. The camping ground at Dushák is a good one and forage is abundant.

9. *Biabanák* (*Baiawak of Walker's map*), *5¼ versts* (*3½ miles*).—The road passes through a level valley the soil of which is fairly hard. An aqueduct supplies Biabanák with an abundance of water. There is plenty of grass and dry forage obtainable.

10. *Washir*, *36 versts* (*24 miles*).—At the 6th *verst* (4th mile) the road inclines towards the line of the mountains and begins to ascend over a very practicable country to a height of 900 feet. On reaching this

altitude it then winds down a gentle slope, crossing *en route* the beds of several water channels which are full of holes. The last 13½ *versts* (9 miles) lie over a shelving valley with hard ground, which becomes, however, rocky and undulating during the 3 *versts* (2 miles) leading into Washir. Throughout the descent above-mentioned, there are villages and gardens and irrigation canals. Water, as well as supplies of all kinds, are abundant at Washir.

11. *Kásh-Rud* (*river*), *21 versts* (*14 miles*).—The road is rocky and uneven, and during the last 6 *versts* (4 miles) crosses several dried-up river beds. The descent into the valley of the Kásh-Rud is steep and bad, but still guns could be got down it. The water of the Kásh-Rud is excellent. Forage is fairly abundant, but there is little grass obtainable.

12. *Háji-Ibrahím, 21 versts* (*14 miles*).—During the spring and autumn seasons the Kásh-Rud river is not fordable on account of the great velocity of its current. In summer, however, when the heat is very great, its depth does not exceed 18 inches. The river having been crossed, the road winds between the hills for a distance of 4½ *versts* (3 miles). It then traverses a waterless steppe and so reaches Háji-Ibrahím. Ferrier asserts that between the Kásh-Rud and Háji-Ibrahím there is not a drop of water. At Háji-Ibrahím water is obtainable in sufficient quantities and every kind of supplies are procurable.

13. *Siyáh-Áb, 15 versts* (*10 miles*).—From here there is a direct road to Herát, passing by Farrah and Sabzawár and through Giráni. There is a good camping ground at Siyáh-Áb. Water and supplies of all kinds are obtainable in sufficiency.

14. *Kharmalik, 33 versts* (*22 miles*).—At the beginning and at the end of this march, valleys, ploughed-fields, and marshes have to be crossed or skirted. Between these the track lies over a rocky ridge with precipitous cliffs on either side. Kharmalik lies in a depression of small area, which is covered with a luxuriant growth of grass. Here and there palm trees and horned cattle appear in sight. In the distance several wretched hovels and towers surrounded by walls catch the eye. Both water and supplies are procurable in the neighbourhood.

15. *Farrah, 30 versts* (*20 miles*).—The road traverses a barren, waterless, and stony waste, and yet the numerous ruins on both sides of the road testify that the locality was once well populated. According to Captain Marsh, in the distance Farrah has the appearance of being a strongly-fortified point, but as its walls are approached both they and the ditch show signs of decay. The area of the old town was equal to one-third that of Herát, but now the sight is marked by some 20 half-ruined hovels. The Afghán inroad of the year 1852 had a grievous effect on this unhappy city.

It has been stated above that between Siyáh-Áb and Herát there is

a direct road *viâ* Giráni, Farrah, and Sabzawár. Malleson recommends that attention be paid to this road, *firstly*, because it is shorter; *secondly*, because a body of troops at Giráni could watch the country in the direction of both Farrah and Sabzawár, the distance between these two points being 120 *versts* (80 miles). The route in question lies through valleys and over mountains peopled by nomad races, but there are no villages to be seen. Captain Marsh took three days to ride along this road, and he passed through Kush, Kala-Musha, and Darwizai. There is water everywhere, because after the first 37 *versts* (24⅔ miles) have been traversed from Farrah, the road follows with slight deflections the valley of the Rud-i-Adrashkán. This river has an abundant supply of water, and according to Ferrier every commander who leaves Herát in the summer season must follow the course of this river, because at that time of the year neither his men nor his horses could have their water-supply secured if he adopted any other route. Sabzawár is distant from Herát 127½ *versts* (85 miles). It stands on the edge of a vast valley of oval shape with a circumference of from 15 to 18 *versts* (10 to 12 miles). Its fort has a picturesque but not a threatening appearance. The outskirts of this town are beautifully cultivated, and large herds of cattle graze on its meadow lands. Water and supplies are obtained in sufficient quantities. The road between Sabzawár and Herát is level and smooth, and is suitable for any kind of transport.

The following are the places on this route :—

1. *Kásh-Jabrán, 31½ versts (21 miles)*.—Half-way there is a dilapidated reservoir. At Kásh-Jabrán a side road leaves the direct route to Kandahar for Giráni.

2. *Adrashkán, 16½ versts (11 miles)*.—At 1½ *versts* (1 mile) the road passes along the banks of the river of the same name.

3. *Sháh-Beg or Búd, 34½ versts (23 miles)*.—At the 7th or 8th *verst* (5th or 6th mile) after crossing the Rud-i-Adrashkán the swift Rud-i-Gaz stream is reached, the width of which varies from 45 to 60 feet. It falls into the Rud-i-Adrashkán a little to the west of the village of the same name; 9 *versts* (6 miles) further on stands the half-ruined serai called Mir-Ullah. It is surrounded by ploughed fields. Fresh springs of water issue forth under its very walls; 10 *versts* (6⅔ miles) further on a brook crosses the road. Fodder in the shape of a short kind of rush is abundant, but supplies are very difficult to procure. At Sháh-Beg the water-supply is sufficient.

4. *Mir-Daud, 18 versts (12 miles)*.—The road from Sháh-Beg lies over a sloping but even descent. The whole country round is here inhabited and is under cultivation. But large covies of grey and red partridges find cover for themselves. Close to Mir-Daud there is a ruined reservoir, another sign of the Afghán yoke.

5. *Herát, 27 versts (18 miles)*.—This city is clearly visible from Mir-

Daud. For a distance of 15 *versts* (10 miles) the road lies through gardens in which there are pine trees of great age ; 6 *versts* (4 miles) f on the Hari-Rud is reached. At this point the river is over 3(wide, but a great deal of its water is diverted to feed 15 canals of depth and with a width of about 12 feet each. These canals are by high mud banks. To the south of the river are rich p lands where in former times stood many villages and gardens. Ru of houses, aqueducts, and other tokens of industry testify to what Herát was in its flourishing days.

END OF PART V OF VOLUME III.

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